

"OVER THE ROCKS WAS THRUST OUT AN EVIL YELLOW FACE."

(See page 611.)

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The Hound of the Baskervilles.

ANOTHER ADVENTURE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

BY CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER IX.

[SECOND REPORT OF DR. WATSON.]
THE LIGHT UPON THE MOOR.



Baskerville Hall, Oct. 15th.
MY DEAR HOLMES,—If I was compelled to leave you without much news during the early days of my mission you must acknowledge that I am making up for lost time, and that events are now crowding thick and fast upon us. In my last report I ended upon my top note with Barrymore at the window, and now I have quite a budget already which will, unless I am much mistaken, considerably surprise you. Things have taken a turn which I could not have anticipated. In some ways they have within the last forty-eight hours become much clearer and in some ways they have become more complicated. But I will tell you all and you shall judge for yourself.

Before breakfast on the morning following my adventure I went down the corridor and examined the room in which Barrymore had been on the night before. The western window through which he had stared so intently has, I noticed, one peculiarity above all other windows in the house—it commands the nearest outlook on to the moor. There is an opening between two trees which enables one from this point of view to look right down upon it, while from all the other windows it is only a distant glimpse which can be obtained. It follows, therefore, that Barrymore, since only this window would serve his purpose, must have been looking out for something or somebody upon the

moor. The night was very dark, so that I can hardly imagine how he could have hoped to see anyone. It had struck me that it was possible that some love intrigue was on foot. That would have accounted for his stealthy movements and also for the uneasiness of his wife. The man is a striking-looking fellow, very well equipped to steal the heart of a country girl, so that this theory seemed to have something to support it. That opening of the door which I had heard after I had returned to my room might mean that he had gone out to keep some clandestine appointment. So I reasoned with myself in the morning, and I tell you the direction of my suspicions, however much the result may have shown that they were unfounded.

But whatever the true explanation of Barrymore's movements might be, I felt that the responsibility of keeping them to myself until I could explain them was more than I could bear. I had an interview with the baronet in his study after breakfast, and I told him all that I had seen. He was less surprised than I had expected.

"I knew that Barrymore walked about nights, and I had a mind to speak to him about it," said he. "Two or three times I have heard his steps in the passage, coming and going, just about the hour you name."

"Perhaps then he pays a visit every night to that particular window," I suggested.

"Perhaps he does. If so, we should be able to shadow him, and see what it is that he is after. I wonder what your friend Holmes would do if he were here?"

"I believe that he would do exactly what you now suggest," said I. "He would follow Barrymore and see what he did."

"Then we shall do it together."

"But surely he would hear us."

"The man is rather deaf, and in any case we must take our chance of that. We'll sit up in my room to-night, and wait until he passes." Sir Henry rubbed his hands with pleasure, and it was evident that he hailed the adventure as a relief to his somewhat quiet life upon the moor.

The baronet has been in communication with the architect who prepared the plans for Sir Charles, and with a contractor from London, so that we may expect great changes to begin here soon. There have been decorators and furnishers up from Plymouth, and it is evident that our friend has large ideas, and means to spare no pains or expense to restore the grandeur of his family. When the house is renovated and refurnished, all that he will need will be a wife to make it complete. Between ourselves there are pretty clear signs that this will not be wanting if the lady is willing, for I have seldom seen a man more infatuated with a woman than he is with our beautiful neighbour, Miss Stapleton. And yet the course of true love does not run quite as smoothly as one would under the circumstances expect. To-day, for example, its surface was broken by a very unexpected ripple, which has caused our friend considerable perplexity and annoyance.

After the conversation which I have quoted about Barrymore Sir Henry put on his hat and prepared to go out. As a matter of course I did the same.

"What, are *you* coming, Watson?" he asked, looking at me in a curious way.

"That depends on whether you are going on the moor," said I.

"Yes, I am."

"Well, you know what my instructions are. I am sorry to intrude, but you heard how earnestly Holmes insisted that I should not leave you, and especially that you should not go alone upon the moor."

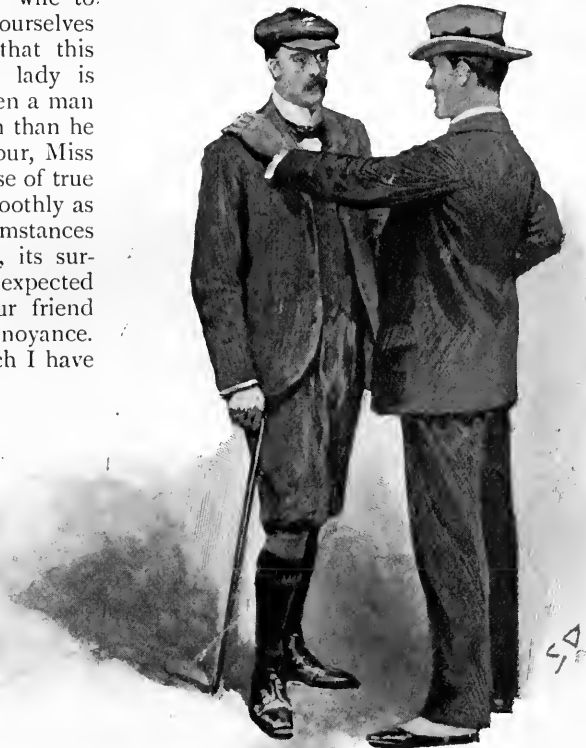
Sir Henry put his hand upon my shoulder, with a pleasant smile.

"My dear fellow," said he, "Holmes, with all his wisdom, did not foresee some things

which have happened since I have been on the moor. You understand me? I am sure that you are the last man in the world who would wish to be a spoil-sport. I must go out alone."

It put me in a most awkward position. I was at a loss what to say or what to do, and before I had made up my mind he picked up his cane and was gone.

But when I came to think the matter over my conscience reproached me bitterly for having on any pretext allowed him to go out of my sight. I imagined what my feelings would be if I had to return to you and to confess that some misfortune had occurred through my disregard for your instructions. I assure you my cheeks flushed at the very thought. It might not even now be too late



"SIR HENRY PUT HIS HAND UPON MY SHOULDER."

to overtake him, so I set off at once in the direction of Merripit House.

I hurried along the road at the top of my speed without seeing anything of Sir Henry, until I came to the point where the moor path branches off. There, fearing that perhaps I had come in the wrong direction

after all, I mounted a hill from which I could command a view—the same hill which is cut into the dark quarry. Thence I saw him at once. He was on the moor path, about a quarter of a mile off, and a lady was by his side who could only be Miss Stapleton. It was clear that there was already an understanding between them and that they had met by appointment. They were walking slowly along in deep conversation, and I saw her making quick little movements of her hands as if she were very earnest in what she was saying, while he listened intently, and once or twice shook his head in strong dissent. I stood among the rocks watching them, very much puzzled as to what I should do next. To follow them and break into their intimate conversation seemed to be an outrage, and yet my clear duty was never for an instant to let him out of my sight. To act the spy upon a friend was a hateful task. Still, I could see no better course than to observe him from the hill, and to clear my conscience by confessing to him afterwards what I had done. It is true that if any sudden danger had threatened him I was too far away to be of use, and yet I am sure that you will agree with me that the position was very difficult, and that there was nothing more which I could do.

Our friend, Sir Henry, and the lady had halted on the path and were standing deeply absorbed in their conversation, when I was suddenly aware that I was not the only witness of their interview. A wisp of green floating in the air caught my eye, and another glance showed me that it was carried on a stick by a man who was moving among the broken ground. It was Stapleton with his butterfly-net. He was very much closer to the pair than I was, and he appeared to be moving in their direction. At this instant Sir Henry suddenly drew Miss Stapleton to his side. His arm was round her, but it seemed to me that she was straining away from him with her face averted. He stooped his head to hers, and she raised one hand as if in protest. Next moment I saw them spring apart and turn hurriedly round. Stapleton was the cause of the interruption. He was running wildly towards them, his absurd net dangling behind him. He gesticulated and almost danced with excitement in front of the lovers. What the scene meant I could not imagine, but it seemed to me that Stapleton was abusing Sir Henry, who offered explanations, which became more angry as the other refused to accept them. The lady stood by in haughty silence.

Finally Stapleton turned upon his heel and beckoned in a peremptory way to his sister, who, after an irresolute glance at Sir Henry, walked off by the side of her brother. The naturalist's angry gestures showed that the lady was included in his displeasure. The baronet stood for a minute looking after them, and then he walked slowly back the way that he had come, his head hanging, the very picture of dejection.

What all this meant I could not imagine, but I was deeply ashamed to have witnessed so intimate a scene without my friend's knowledge. I ran down the hill therefore and met the baronet at the bottom. His face was flushed with anger and his brows were wrinkled, like one who is at his wits' ends what to do.

"Halloa, Watson! Where have you dropped from?" said he. "You don't mean to say that you came after me in spite of all?"

I explained everything to him: how I had found it impossible to remain behind, how I had followed him, and how I had witnessed all that had occurred. For an instant his eyes blazed at me, but my frankness disarmed his anger, and he broke at last into a rather rueful laugh.

"You would have thought the middle of that prairie a fairly safe place for a man to be private," said he, "but, by thunder, the whole country-side seems to have been out to see me do my wooing—and a mighty poor wooing at that! Where had you engaged a seat?"

"I was on that hill."

"Quite in the back row, eh? But her brother was well up to the front. Did you see him come out on us?"

"Yes, I did."

"Did he ever strike you as being crazy—this brother of hers?"

"I can't say that he ever did."

"I daresay not. I always thought him sane enough until to-day, but you can take it from me that either he or I ought to be in a strait-jacket. What's the matter with me, anyhow? You've lived near me for some weeks, Watson. Tell me straight, now! Is there anything that would prevent me from making a good husband to a woman that I loved?"

"I should say not."

"He can't object to my worldly position, so it must be myself that he has this down on. What has he against me? I never hurt man or woman in my life that I know of. And yet he would not so much as let me touch the tips of her fingers."



"Did he say so?"

"That, and a deal more. I tell you, Watson, I've only known her these few weeks, but

from the first I just felt that she was made for me, and she, too—she was happy when she was with me, and that I'll swear. There's a light in a woman's eyes that speaks louder than words. But he has never let us get together, and it was only to-day for the first time that I saw a chance of having a few words with her alone. She was glad to meet me, but when she did it was not love that she would talk about, and she wouldn't have let me talk about it either if she could have stopped it. She kept coming back to it that this was a place of danger, and that she would never be happy until I had left it. I told her that since I had seen her I was in no hurry to leave it, and that if she really wanted me to go the only way to work it was for her to arrange to go with me. With that I offered in as many words to marry her,

"SIR HENRY SUDDENLY DREW MISS STAPLETON TO HIS SIDE."

but before she could answer down came this brother of hers, running at us with a face on him like a madman. He was just white with rage, and those light eyes of his were blazing with fury. What was I doing with the lady? How dared I offer her attentions which were distasteful to her? Did I think that because I was a baronet I could do what I liked? If he had not been her brother I should have known better how to answer him. As it was I told him that my feelings towards his sister were such as I was not ashamed of, and that I hoped that she might honour me by becoming my wife. That seemed to make the matter no better, so then I lost my temper too, and I answered him rather more hotly than I should perhaps, considering that she was standing by. So it ended by his going off with her, as you saw, and here am I as badly puzzled a man as any in this county. Just tell me what it all means, Watson, and I'll owe you more than ever I can hope to pay."

I tried one or two explanations, but, indeed, I was completely puzzled myself. Our friend's title, his fortune, his age, his character, and his appearance are all in his favour, and I know nothing against him, unless it be this dark fate which runs in his family. That his advances should be rejected so brusquely without any reference to the lady's own wishes, and that the lady should accept the situation without protest, is very amazing. However, our conjectures were set at rest by a visit from Stapleton himself that very afternoon. He had come to offer apologies for his rudeness of the morning, and after a long private interview with Sir Henry in his study the upshot of their conversation was that the breach is quite healed, and that we are to dine at Merripit House next Friday as a sign of it.

"I don't say now that he isn't a crazy man," said Sir Henry; "I can't forget the look in his eyes when he ran at me this morning, but I must allow that no man could make a more handsome apology than he has done."

"Did he give any explanation of his conduct?"

"His sister is everything in his life, he says. That is natural enough, and I am glad that he should understand her value. They have always been together, and according to his account he has been a very lonely man with only her as a companion, so that the thought of losing her was really terrible to him. He had not understood, he said, that I was becoming attached to her, but when he saw with his own eyes that it was really so, and that she might be taken away from him, it gave him such a shock that for a time he was not responsible for what he said or did. He was very sorry for all that had passed, and he recognised how foolish and how selfish it was that he should imagine that he could hold a beautiful woman like his sister to himself for her whole life. If she had to leave him he had rather it was to a neighbour like myself than to anyone else. But in any case it was a blow to him, and it would take him some time before he could prepare himself to meet it. He would withdraw all opposition upon his part if I would promise for three months to let the matter rest and to be content with cultivating the lady's friendship during that time without claiming her love. This I promised, and so the matter rests."

So there is one of our small mysteries cleared up. It is something to have touched bottom anywhere in this bog in which we are floundering. We know now why Stapleton looked with disfavour upon his sister's suitor—even when that suitor was so eligible a one as Sir Henry. And now I pass on to another thread which I have extricated out of the tangled skein, the mystery of the sobs in the night, of the tear-stained face of Mrs. Barrymore, of the secret journey of the butler to the western lattice window. Congratulate me, my dear Holmes, and tell me that I have not disappointed you as an agent—that you do not regret the confidence which you showed in me when you sent me down. All these things have by one night's work been thoroughly cleared.

I have said "by one night's work," but, in truth, it was by two nights' work, for on the first we drew entirely blank. I sat up with Sir Henry in his room until nearly three

o'clock in the morning, but no sound of any sort did we hear except the chiming clock upon the stairs. It was a most melancholy vigil, and ended by each of us falling asleep in our chairs. Fortunately we were not discouraged, and we determined to try again. The next night we lowered the lamp and sat smoking cigarettes, without making the least sound. It was incredible how slowly the hours crawled by, and yet we were helped through it by the same sort of patient interest which the hunter must feel as he watches the trap into which he hopes the game may wander. One struck, and two, and we had almost for the second time given it up in despair, when in an instant we both sat bolt upright in our chairs, with all our weary senses keenly on the alert once more. We had heard the creak of a step in the passage.

Very stealthily we heard it pass along until it died away in the distance. Then the baronet gently opened his door and we set out in pursuit. Already our man had gone round the gallery, and the corridor was all in darkness. Softly we stole along until we had come into the other wing. We were just in time to catch a glimpse of the tall, black-bearded figure, his shoulders rounded, as he tip-toed down the passage. Then he passed through, the same door as before, and the light of the candle framed it in the darkness and shot one single yellow beam across the gloom of the corridor. We shuffled cautiously towards it, trying every plank before we dared to put our whole weight upon it. We had taken the precaution of leaving our boots behind us, but, even so, the old boards snapped and creaked beneath our tread. Sometimes it seemed impossible that he should fail to hear our approach. However, the man is fortunately rather deaf, and he was entirely preoccupied in that which he was doing. When at last we reached the door and peeped through we found him crouching at the window, candle in hand, his white, intent face pressed against the pane, exactly as I had seen him two nights before.

We had arranged no plan of campaign, but the baronet is a man to whom the most direct way is always the most natural. He walked into the room, and as he did so Barrymore sprang up from the window with a sharp hiss of his breath, and stood, livid and trembling, before us. His dark eyes, glaring out of the white mask of his face, were full of horror and astonishment as he gazed from Sir Henry to me.

"What are you doing here, Barrymore?"

"Nothing, sir." His agitation was so great that he could hardly speak, and the shadows sprang up and down from the shaking of his candle. "It was the window, sir. I go round at night to see that they are fastened."

"On the second floor?"

secret, and that I cannot tell it. If it concerned no one but myself I would not try to keep it from you."

A sudden idea occurred to me, and I took the candle from the window-sill, where the butler had placed it.

"He must have been holding it as a signal," said I. "Let us see if there is any answer." I held it as he had done, and stared out into the darkness of the night. Vaguely I could discern the black bank of the trees and the lighter expanse of the moor, for the moon was behind the clouds. And then I gave a cry of exultation, for a tiny pin-point of yellow light had suddenly trans-fixed the dark veil, and glowed steadily in the centre of the black square framed by the window.

"There it is!" I cried.

"No, no, sir, it is nothing — nothing at all!" the butler broke in; "I assure you, sir——"

"Move your light across the window, Watson!" cried the baronet. "See, the other moves also! Now, you rascal, do

you deny that it is a signal? Come, speak up! Who is your confederate out yonder, and what is this conspiracy that is going on?"

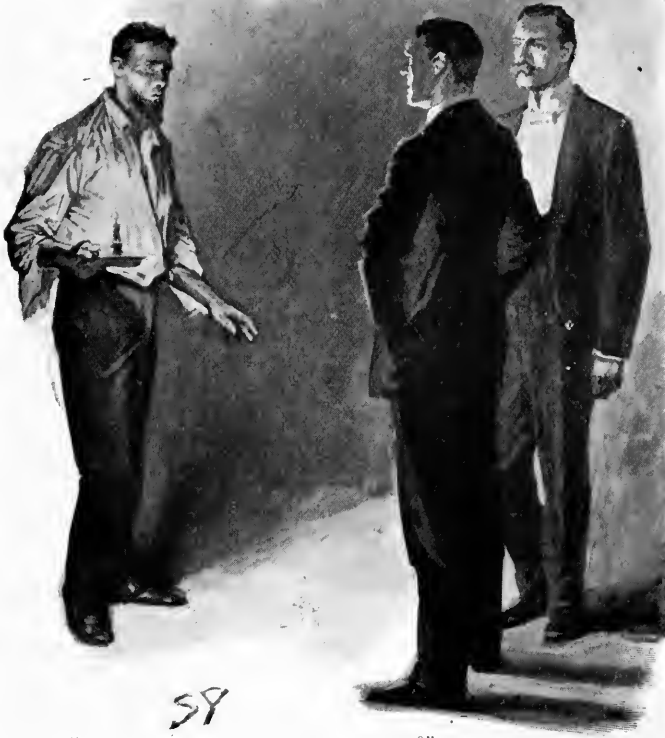
The man's face became openly defiant.

"It is my business, and not yours. I will not tell."

"Then you leave my employment right away."

"Very good, sir. If I must I must."

"And you go in disgrace. By thunder, you may well be ashamed of yourself. Your family has lived with mine for over a hundred years under this roof, and here I find you deep in some dark plot against me."



"WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, BARRYMORE?"

"Yes, sir, all the windows."

"Look here, Barrymore," said Sir Henry, sternly; "we have made up our minds to have the truth out of you, so it will save you trouble to tell it sooner rather than later. Come, now! No lies! What were you doing at that window?"

The fellow looked at us in a helpless way, and he wrung his hands together like one who is in the last extremity of doubt and misery.

"I was doing no harm, sir. I was holding a candle to the window."

"And why were you holding a candle to the window?"

"Don't ask me, Sir Henry—don't ask me! I give you my word, sir, that it is not my

"No, no, sir; no, not against you!" It was a woman's voice, and Mrs. Barrymore, paler and more horror-struck than her husband, was standing at the door. Her bulky figure in a shawl and skirt might have been comic were it not for the intensity of feeling upon her face.

"We have to go, Eliza. This is the end of it. You can pack our things," said the butler.

"Oh, John, John, have I brought you to this? It is my doing, Sir Henry—all mine. He has done nothing except for my sake, and because I asked him."

"Speak out, then! What does it mean?"

"My unhappy brother is starving on the moor. We cannot let him perish at our very gates. The light is a signal to him that food is ready for him, and his light out yonder is to show the spot to which to bring it."

"Then your brother is——"

"The escaped convict, sir—Selden, the criminal."

"That's the truth, sir," said Barrymore. "I said that it was not my secret and that I could not tell it to you. But now you have heard it, and you will see that if there was a plot it was not against you."

This, then, was the explanation of the stealthy expeditions at night and the light at the window. Sir Henry and I both stared at the woman in amazement. Was it possible that this stolidly respectable person was of the same blood as one of the most notorious criminals in the country?

"Yes, sir, my name was Selden, and he is my younger brother. We humoured him too much when he was a lad, and gave him his own way in everything until he came to think that the world was made for his pleasure, and that he could do what he liked in it. Then, as he grew older, he met wicked companions, and the devil entered into him until he broke my mother's heart and dragged our name in the dirt. From crime to crime he sank lower and lower, until it is only the

mercy of God which has snatched him from the scaffold; but to me, sir, he was always the little curly-headed boy that I had nursed and played with, as an elder sister would. That was why he broke prison, sir. He knew that I was here and that we could not refuse to help him. When he dragged himself here one night, weary and starving, with the warders hard at his heels, what could we do? We took him in and fed him and cared for him. Then you returned, sir, and my brother thought he would be safer on the moor than



"THE ESCAPÉD CONVICT, SIR."

anywhere else until the hue and cry was over, so he lay in hiding there. But every second night we made sure if he was still there by putting a light in the window, and if there was an answer my husband took out some bread and meat to him. Every day we hoped that he was gone, but as long as he was there we could not desert him. That is the whole truth, as I am an honest Christian woman, and you will see that if there is blame in the matter it does not lie with my husband, but with me, for whose sake he has done all that he has."

The woman's words came with an intense earnestness which carried conviction with them,

"Is this true, Barrymore?"

"Yes, Sir Henry. Every word of it."

"Well, I cannot blame you for standing by your own wife. Forget what I have said. Go to your room, you two, and we shall talk further about this matter in the morning."

When they were gone we looked out of the window again. Sir Henry had flung it open, and the cold night wind beat in upon our faces. Far away in the black distance there still glowed that one tiny point of yellow light.

"I wonder he dares," said Sir Henry.

"It may be so placed as to be only visible from here."

"Very likely. How far do you think it is?"

"Out by the Cleft Tor, I think."

"Not more than a mile or two off."

"Hardly that."

"Well, it cannot be far if Barrymore had to carry out the food to it. And he is waiting, this villain, beside that candle. By thunder, Watson, I am going out to take that man!"

The same thought had crossed my own mind. It was not as if the Barrymores had taken us into their confidence. Their secret had been forced from them. The man was a danger to the community, an unmitigated scoundrel for whom there was neither pity nor excuse. We were only doing our duty in taking this chance of putting him back where he could do no harm. With his brutal and violent nature, others would have to pay the price if we held our hands. Any night, for example, our neighbours the Stapletons might be attacked by him, and it may have been the thought of this which made Sir Henry so keen upon the adventure.

"I will come," said I.

"Then get your revolver and put on your boots. The sooner we start the better, as the fellow may put out his light and be off."

In five minutes we were outside the door, starting upon our expedition. We hurried through the dark shrubbery, amid the dull moaning of the autumn wind and the rustle of the falling leaves. The night air was heavy with the smell of damp and decay. Now and again the moon peeped out for an instant, but clouds were driving over the face of the sky, and just as we came out on the moor a thin rain began to fall. The light still burned steadily in front.

"Are you armed?" I asked.

"I have a hunting-crop."

"We must close in on him rapidly, for he is said to be a desperate fellow. We shall take

him by surprise and have him at our mercy before he can resist."

"I say, Watson," said the baronet, "what would Holmes say to this? How about that hour of darkness in which the power of evil is exalted?"

As if in answer to his words there rose suddenly out of the vast gloom of the moor that strange cry which I had already heard upon the borders of the great Grimpen Mire. It came with the wind through the silence of the night, a long, deep mutter, then a rising howl, and then the sad moan in which it died away. Again and again it sounded, the whole air throbbing with it, strident, wild, and menacing. The baronet caught my sleeve and his face glimmered white through the darkness.

"Good heavens, what's that, Watson?"

"I don't know. It's a sound they have on the moor. I heard it once before."

It died away, and an absolute silence closed in upon us. We stood straining our ears, but nothing came.

"Watson," said the baronet, "it was the cry of a hound."

My blood ran cold in my veins, for there was a break in his voice which told of the sudden horror which had seized him.

"What do they call this sound?" he asked.

"Who?"

"The folk on the country-side."

"Oh, they are ignorant people. Why should you mind what they call it?"

"Tell me, Watson. What do they say of it?"

I hesitated, but could not escape the question.

"They say it is the cry of the Hound of the Baskervilles."

He groaned, and was silent for a few moments.

"A hound it was," he said, at last, "but it seemed to come from miles away, over yonder, I think."

"It was hard to say whence it came."

"It rose and fell with the wind. Isn't that the direction of the great Grimpen Mire?"

"Yes, it is."

"Well, it was up there. Come now, Watson, didn't you think yourself that it was the cry of a hound? I am not a child. You need not fear to speak the truth."

"Stapleton was with me when I heard it last. He said that it might be the calling of a strange bird."

"No, no, it was a hound. My God, can there be some truth in all these stories? Is

it possible that I am really in danger from so dark a cause? You don't believe it, do you, Watson?"

"No, no."

"And yet it was one thing to laugh about it in London, and it is another to stand out here in the darkness of the moor and to hear such a cry as that. And my uncle! There was the footprint of the hound beside him as he lay. It all fits together. I don't think that I am a coward, Watson, but that sound seemed to freeze my very blood. Feel my hand!"

It was as cold as a block of marble.

"You'll be all right to-morrow."

"I don't think I'll get that cry out of my head. What do you advise that we do now?"

"Shall we turn back?"

"No, by thunder; we have come out to get our man, and we will do it. We are after the convict, and a hell-hound, as likely as not, after us. Come on! We'll see it through if all the fiends of the pit were loose upon the moor."

We stumbled slowly along in the darkness, with the black loom of the craggy hills around us, and the yellow speck of light burning steadily in front. There is nothing so deceptive as the distance of a light upon a pitch-dark night, and sometimes the glimmer seemed to be far away upon the horizon and sometimes it might have been within a few yards of us. But at last we could see whence it came, and then we knew that we were indeed very close. A guttering candle was stuck in a crevice of the rocks which flanked it on each side so as to keep the wind from it, and also to prevent it from being visible, save in the direction of Baskerville Hall. A boulder of granite concealed our approach, and crouching behind it we gazed over it at

the signal light. It was strange to see this single candle burning there in the middle of the moor, with no sign of life near it—just the one straight yellow flame and the gleam of the rock on each side of it.

"What shall we do now?" whispered Sir Henry.

"Wait here. He must be near his light. Let us see if we can get a glimpse of him."

The words were hardly out of my mouth when we both saw him. Over the rocks, in the crevice of which the candle burned, there was thrust out an evil yellow face, a terrible animal face, all seamed and scored with vile



"I SAW THE FIGURE
OF A MAN UPON
THE TOR."

passions. Foul with mire, with a bristling beard, and hung with matted hair, it might well have belonged to one of those old savages who dwelt in the burrows on the hill-sides. The light beneath him was reflected in his small, cunning eyes, which peered fiercely to right and left through the darkness, like a crafty and savage animal who has heard the steps of the hunters.

Something had evidently aroused his sus-

pitions. It may have been that Barrymore had some private signal which we had neglected to give, or the fellow may have had some other reason for thinking that all was not well, but I could read his fears upon his wicked face. Any instant he might dash out the light and vanish in the darkness. I sprang forward therefore, and Sir Henry did the same. At the same moment the convict screamed out a curse at us and hurled a rock which splintered up against the boulder which had sheltered us. I caught one glimpse of his short, squat, strongly-built figure as he sprang to his feet and turned to run. At the same moment by a lucky chance the moon broke through the clouds. We rushed over the brow of the hill, and there was our man running with great speed down the other side, springing over the stones in his way with the activity of a mountain goat. A lucky long shot of my revolver might have crippled him, but I had brought it only to defend myself if attacked, and not to shoot an unarmed man who was running away.

We were both fair runners and in good condition, but we soon found that we had no chance of overtaking him. We saw him for a long time in the moonlight until he was only a small speck moving swiftly among the boulders upon the side of a distant hill. We ran and ran until we were completely blown, but the space between us grew ever wider. Finally we stopped and sat panting on two rocks, while we watched him disappearing in the distance.

And it was at this moment that there occurred a most strange and unexpected thing. We had risen from our rocks and were turning to go home, having abandoned the hopeless chase. The moon was low upon the right, and the jagged pinnacle of a granite tor stood up against the lower curve of its silver disc. There, outlined as black as an ebony statue on that shining background, I saw the figure of a man upon the tor. Do not think that it was a delusion, Holmes. I assure you that I have never in my life seen anything more clearly. As far as I could judge, the figure was that of a tall, thin man. He stood with his legs a little separated, his arms folded, his head bowed, as if he were brooding over that enormous

wilderness of peat and granite which lay before him. He might have been the very spirit of that terrible place. It was not the convict. This man was far from the place where the latter had disappeared. Besides, he was a much taller man. With a cry of surprise I pointed him out to the baronet, but in the instant during which I had turned to grasp his arm the man was gone. There was the sharp pinnacle of granite still cutting the lower edge of the moon, but its peak bore no trace of that silent and motionless figure.

I wished to go in that direction and to search the tor, but it was some distance away. The baronet's nerves were still quivering from that cry, which recalled the dark story of his family, and he was not in the mood for fresh adventures. He had not seen this lonely man upon the tor and could not feel the thrill which his strange presence and his commanding attitude had given to me. "A warder, no doubt," said he. "The moor has been thick with them since this fellow escaped." Well, perhaps his explanation may be the right one, but I should like to have some further proof of it. To-day we mean to communicate to the Princetown people where they should look for their missing man, but it is hard lines that we have not actually had the triumph of bringing him back as our own prisoner. Such are the adventures of last night, and you must acknowledge, my dear Holmes, that I have done you very well in the matter of a report. Much of what I tell you is no doubt quite irrelevant, but still I feel that it is best that I should let you have all the facts and leave you to select for yourself those which will be of most service to you in helping you to your conclusions. We are certainly making some progress. So far as the Barrymores go we have found the motive of their actions, and that has cleared up the situation very much. But the moor with its mysteries and its strange inhabitants remains as inscrutable as ever. Perhaps in my next I may be able to throw some light upon this also. Best of all would it be if you could come down to us.

(To be continued.)

Mr. William Gillette as Sherlock Holmes.

BY HAROLD J. SHEPSTONE.



It was in the manager's room at the Lyceum Theatre that I first had the pleasure of meeting the famous stage detective, Mr. William Gillette. I have seen him since, both on and off the stage, and have had many pleasant little chats with him. His tall, alert figure, clear-cut features, deep-set eyes, and cool bearing make him an interesting and at the same time a decidedly mysterious personality; interesting because of his individuality and mysterious because of his wonderful versatility. As a stage detective he is a marvel of vividness, of directness, of economy of effort, of dramatic force, of perfect self-poise, of instant command of resources, of unescapable convictions.

But it is of Gillette the man that I wish to speak first. His individuality is remarkable. His very presence impresses you; his manner, his actions, and movements bespeak a personality that is no mere surface cloak that can be removed and explained at leisure. It is an individuality that is bred in the bone; it is a part of the fibre of character and completely beyond analysis. You can tell what a person is, but you cannot say why he is. Forcible and striking as Mr. Gillette's individuality undoubtedly is, he possesses a wonderful versatility in character delineation—a strange and inexplicable histrionic quality that enables him constantly to maintain an insistent, strikingly unique and seemingly fixed personality, and at the same time project an impersonation that is unmistakably individualized. Were it other-

wise, Gillette the actor would not have impersonated Dr. Conan Doyle's wonderful creation with such marvellous success.

His tall, slender figure and natural composure enable him to incarnate with astonishing faithfulness the Sherlock Holmes of fiction. Indeed, this personal likeness to the great literary hero has led to some curious incidents. When Mr. Gillette arrived on the *Celtic* in Liverpool, in August last, Mr.

Pendleton, of the London and North-Western Railway, had a letter to deliver to him. He went on board and asked one of the passengers if he knew Mr. Gillette. The man replied:—

"Do you know Sherlock Holmes?"

The visitor was rather taken back, and said: "I have read the stories in *THE STRAND MAGAZINE*."

"That's all you need know," said the passenger. "Just look around till you see a man who fits your idea of what Sherlock Holmes ought to be, and that's he."

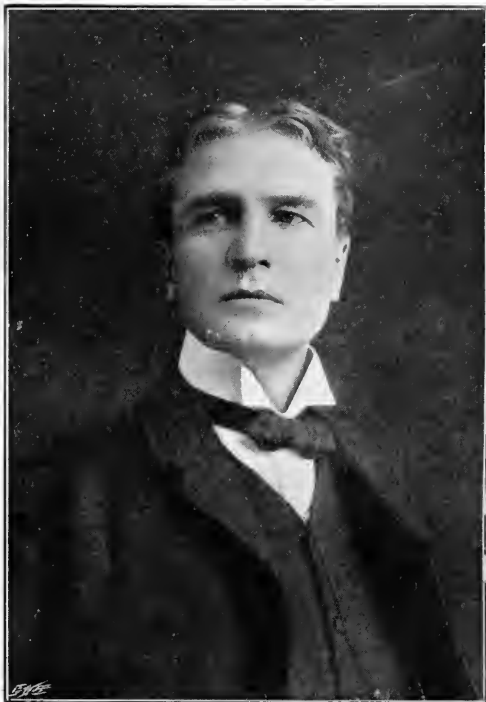
Mr. Pendleton went away, with a laugh. As he was going up the companion-way he

collided with a gentleman, and as he looked up to apologize the passenger's advice occurred to him, and he said, "Are you Mr. Gillette?"

"I was, before you ran into me," was the reply.

"Here's a letter for you."

Although Mr. Gillette has been before the public as a popular and successful actor for many years, few know anything of his private life. Even his most intimate friends would never dream of asking him. Extremely modest and unassuming, Mr. Gillette abhors talking of himself.



MR. WILLIAM GILLETTE.
From a Photo. by Sarony, New York.

Those who knew him as a boy describe him as "a precocious youth fond of spouting Webster's speeches." He gave early evidence of theatrical inclinations, and at the age of ten astonished his family by constructing a miniature theatre, fitted with grooves, scenery, foot and border lights, the puppets of which were worked from above with black thread. The next step came a year later, when the juvenile stage-manager organized in the garret a complete high-class stock company. From the attic it descended to the drawing-room, which became an extemporized temple of the drama, to the dubious edification of the Gillette household.

One of Master Gillette's playfellows was Professor Burton, who has very kindly recollections of the pleasant evenings he passed as a boy with his young friend. "When I played as a boy with Gillette," he said, "in Hartford, he was just enough the elder to make patronage and bullying the order, but he never exercised those juvenile rights, and it was typical of him, lad and man. In school his tastes were for science, oratory, and history. When he came on the platform, at the Hartford High School, to deliver a graduation oration, the applause plainly bespoke his popularity amongst his school-fellows." Throughout his teens he still kept up his determination to know all that he could about stagecraft. When he first walked across the boards he investigated everything connected with the stage and its mechanical operations.

To follow Mr. Gillette's career is unnecessary here, interesting as it undoubtedly is. In 1875, when only eighteen years of age, we find him playing minor rôles; while only six years later, to be exact, in 1881, he was playing in his own dramas. It was at New Orleans that he first made his appearance on the stage. It was during one of his long vacations, for he is a graduate of Yale College. Anxious to obtain actual stage experience he joined a stock company in the famous cotton city, giving his services free and furnishing his own wardrobe. One night he made a decided hit in the part which he played, and next morning sought the manager and hinted that a small salary would be appreciated. The manager evidently thought otherwise, for he there and then dismissed him. Such an action was sufficient to discourage any ambitious youth, but young Gillette was by no means despondent. Indeed, he spent the remainder of his vacation in studying characters for the stage in a decidedly curious way. Desiring to make

some special studies among those who imagined themselves ill, he hung out a doctor's sign in a small Ohio town. In a short time he had many patients. Everything went on satisfactorily for some weeks, when the authorities, doubting his being old enough to have a diploma, asked to see that necessary document, whereupon he had to confess. He convinced the officials, however, that he had wrought some wondrous cures with very simple means, and was allowed to depart.

It was in 1875 that Mr. Gillette made his first appearance on the stage as Guzman, in "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady," at the Globe Theatre, Boston. His theatrical godfather was Mark Twain, who was a great friend of his father. Through the humorist's influence he obtained a position in the Boston Stock Company, which, at that time, was one of the most famous companies in America. Mark Twain has declared that he did not think Mr. Gillette was serious, and that when he got him his position he really thought he was having a huge joke with the management. "I do not know," said Mark Twain, "which I like best—having Gillette make a tremendous success, or seeing one of my jokes go wrong. It is the only joke I ever perpetrated that so completely miscarried."

How "Sherlock Holmes" came to be written for the stage is an interesting story. Curiously enough, it was not at the suggestion of Dr. Conan Doyle, Mr. William Gillette, or Mr. Charles Frohman, who is Mr. Gillette's manager, but through the inventive genius of an American reporter. This enterprising individual wrote a paragraph to the effect that Conan Doyle had stated that should anyone ever dramatize Sherlock Holmes it would be William Gillette. The doctor had said nothing of the kind, and at that time had not even met Mr. Gillette or had any correspondence with him. Mr. Charles Frohman came across the paragraph, which was printed in an obscure newspaper, published in the Western States of America, while he was in London. He cut it out and showed it to Mr. Gillette.

To tell the honest truth, Mr. Gillette smiled as he read it. Up to that moment he had voted the stories as almost too impossible for dramatization, and he laughed at the idea of his ever appearing on the stage as the great detective of fiction. He went so far as to suggest to Mr. Frohman, however, that it might probably be a good

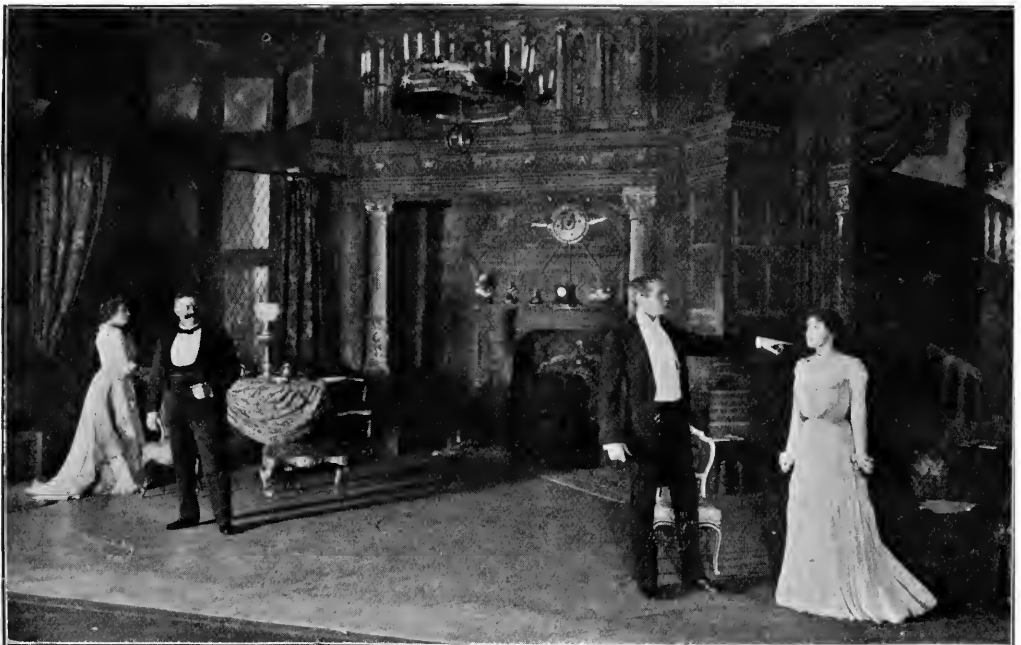
thing to secure the title of "Sherlock Holmes" for dramatic use, and on this suggestion Mr. Frohman negotiated with the doctor on a royalty basis for the use of the name, regardless of what it might be put to in the future. There the matter ended until two years ago, when Mr. Frohman wrote to Mr. Gillette, who was then on his farewell tour in "Secret Service" in California, asking him to prepare a stage version of the hero detective.

The first thing Mr. Gillette did was to write to Dr. Conan Doyle asking to what extent he might take liberties, if he so desired, with the literary character. The actor speaks in the highest praise of the courteous communications he received from the doctor, who said that he might marry the detective, or murder him, or do anything he pleased with him, preferring to leave a stage detective entirely in the hands of a master actor. Before commencing his task Mr. Gillette made himself thoroughly acquainted with the stories. In four weeks the play was finished, and as Mr. Frohman had given him six weeks' leave of absence from the cast of "Secret Service" for the task, he went to San Francisco to spend the remaining two at his ease.

Here an accident occurred which would spell discouragement to any man not possessed of Mr. Gillette's forceful and

resourceful nature. The manuscript was in the possession of his secretary, who was staying at the Baldwin Hotel. As many may remember, this hotel, which adjoins the theatre, was burned and many lives were lost. There was no time to save anything, and the secretary barely escaped with his life, leaving the manuscript in the burning building. The moment he realized what had happened he rushed to the Palace Hotel, where Mr. Gillette was stopping. It was nearly three o'clock in the morning when he gained admission to the playwright's apartments and excitedly told him that the result of their hard work was in ashes. The great stage detective looked up from his pillows in his quiet way and characteristically asked: "Is *this* hotel on fire?" "No, indeed!" said the secretary. "Well, come and tell me all about it in the morning," responded the actor.

Mr. Gillette has not written "Sherlock Holmes" by merely stringing together a number of incidents from the adventurous career of the detective. It is an original play, in the title-rôle of which Mr. Gillette has adopted the methods of Conan Doyle's world-famous creation. It is nothing less than an interesting episode in the career of the great detective, wonderfully conceived and cleverly acted. In the space of three and a half hours' acting, with some 10,000



From a Photo, by]

ACT I. SHERLOCK HOLMES'S FIRST MEETING WITH MISS ALICE FAULKNER.

[Byron, New York.

words, Mr. Gillette and his company present an adventure of the indomitable Sherlock Holmes that would require at least 80,000 words in cold type to relate.

The opening scene of the play is in the house of the Larrabees, a pair of unscrupulous adventurers, who are living under the name of Chetwood, and have in their charge Alice Faulkner, whom they have managed to put under an obligation, and who is, practically, a prisoner in their house. It soon transpires in the preliminary dialogue that these Larrabees know that Alice Faulkner has in her possession certain papers, letters, and photographs which compromise a certain exalted foreign personage. These papers came into Miss Faulkner's possession at the death of a sister, who had been betrayed by her titled lover and died in grief and shame. While pretending to befriend Miss Faulkner from noble motives, the Larrabees are in reality trying to gain possession of the compromising documents for blackmailing purposes.

Sherlock Holmes, the detective, having been commissioned by the nobleman to secure these papers which the exalted personage desires earnestly to have, as he contemplates marriage, succeeds in placing in the house of the Larrabees as butler one of his agents, through whom he learns all that goes on there. The detective calls at the house and, at his request to see Miss Faulkner, Mrs. Larrabee comes down to impersonate her; but the deception will not do, and the detective insists upon seeing the real Alice Faulkner. When they meet he urges her to give up the papers and forego

her desires for revenge. Finding her obdurate he gives the signal for a prearranged alarm of fire, and during the excitement the girl betrays the hiding-place of the papers and Holmes takes possession of them. Having got them, however, his first act is to return them to Miss Faulkner. His reason for doing this is not a sudden impulse of generosity, but it is because it is the best means of attaining his design. He cannot take her property against her will without actually breaking the law. If he can gain her confidence and put her under an obligation

he may soften her bitterness and prevail upon her to voluntarily give up her plans of revenge.

The Larrabees now see that with Holmes on the case they are thoroughly incapable of coping alone with his superior ability, and they call to their aid Professor Moriarty, London's high caliph of crime, who has at his beck and call half of London's underworld, and who enters into the case with an enthusiasm born of his hatred of Holmes because the detective had, in the past, thwarted many of his plans.

Moriarty calls on Holmes in his rooms in Baker Street with the avowed purpose of patching up a peace, but with the real purpose of taking the detective's life. Holmes is prepared for this, and having got the Professor at the point of his revolver, in a very clever scene, covers him until his boy, Billy, removes the criminal's revolver.

This development of the story brings the drama to the close of the second act, and the first scene of the third act shows Moriarty in his underground office, smarting under the



ACT II. SHERLOCK HOLMES IN HIS ROOMS AT BAKER STREET.
From a Photo. by Savory, New York.

double irritation of having been frustrated and made ridiculous. In conjunction with the Larrabees, he lays a scheme to have the compromising papers counterfeited, and for the purpose of selling these counterfeits to Holmes they scheme to lure him to the gas-chamber in Stepney, where he is to be met by some of Moriarty's men, bound, gagged, and asphyxiated. In the meantime, Alice Faulkner has learned of the plot to murder him, makes her way to the rendezvous, and promises Larrabee that if he spares the

marks where he abandons his method of acquiescence in all that his enemies propose and where he begins his aggressive warfare for the apprehending of the criminals. He denounces Larrabee, and Larrabee taunts him and declares that he has not a witness to prove his assertion that he has been robbed. Here Larrabee, like Moriarty, reckoned without his host, for Holmes knew that Alice Faulkner was in that gas-chamber, and he rescues and unbinds her.

Here comes one of the most thrilling episodes in the drama. In reply to Larrabee's whistle three ruffians come in for the purpose of carrying out the original plan laid by Moriarty, and inform Holmes that they propose to tie him to the top of the table, turn on the gas, and leave him. Here Holmes proves the old maxim that self-possession in the face of danger is half the battle won. He calmly puffs at his cigar, harasses the men by pretending to write descriptions of them for the police, and before they are aware of what he is doing picks up a chair and smashes the lamp. Instantly all is intense blackness, except for the glow of the detective's Havana, and the cry goes up, "Track him by the cigar." A crash of glass is heard, the glow is seen motionless, and Holmes's voice is heard telling the would-be murderers they will find the cigar in the crevice of

the window, and the door, with its heavy bars, which had been carefully prepared to lock Holmes in, is slammed on the criminals and the tables are turned.

Meanwhile the great criminal has not been idle. He has burned down Holmes's house. He has laid many plans to capture him, and finally comes to Dr. Watson's office in the guise of a cabman, and here Holmes plays his trump card, and Moriarty is made a prisoner. Quickly following on this, the emissaries of the disreputable nobleman call by appointment to receive the papers from Holmes's hand. He gives them the counter-



ACT III. THE TURNING-POINT IN THE PLAY—HERE SHERLOCK HOLMES ACCUSES LARRABEE OF ROBBERY. [Byron, New York.]

detective's life she will give him the genuine papers. He promises, but when he learns the hiding-place of the precious papers binds and gags her and has her locked in a cupboard. At this point Holmes arrives. He knows the gas-chamber and he knows Larrabee's game, and for purposes of his own falls in with the latter, buys the counterfeit packet, and in doing so exposes a roll of bank-notes which Larrabee, believing that the detective is to be murdered, grabs and puts in his pocket. This is what Holmes has been waiting for. He now has something by which he can hold Larrabee, and this point



ACT III. THE MOST THRILLING INCIDENT IN THE DRAMA—SHERLOCK HOLMES ESCAPES FROM THE STEPNEY GAS-CHAMBER BY SMASHING THE LAMP AND EVADING HIS WOULD-BE CAPTORS IN THE DARKNESS.
From a Photo. by Byron, New York.

feits which he has purchased. They discover that they are counterfeits and taunt him, but Holmes has been prepared for this. In an adjoining room Alice Faulkner waits, where she can hear, and she has with her the originals. When the emissaries threaten Holmes with prosecution for deceiving them Miss Faulkner hears and appears on the scene, and to save him offers them the papers they covet, not merely because of the esteem she has for the detective, but because she has learned the lesson taught by little Dan Cupid.

Then comes the last scene. Holmes tells the girl that he has won her admiration, nay, her love, to further his own selfish ends, of which he is ashamed, and that she is at liberty to go. Woman's wit is not so easily fooled, however, and Miss Faulkner tells the detective that she does not believe him, and that he is not the only one who can read things from small details. Just how it ends Mr. Gillette does not tell; the audiences are left to find that out themselves. But the picture which they carry away as they leave the theatre is the fair head of Miss Faulkner resting on the shoulder of the detective.

All through the play there are innumerable instances of the marvellous reasoning powers of the great detective. Even now, after the play has had a run of two years, Mr. Gillette receives an extraordinary number of letters

asking him how Holmes knew this and that, and why he does certain things. But it is not difficult to see that there is not a part in the whole piece that is not absolutely reasonable, if you once admit that a man like Holmes, with an extraordinary faculty for observing details and reasoning quickly from them, exists, and they certainly do, as we have such men in real life, to a greater or less extent. Once admitting that, there is not an unreasonable or improbable speech or situation in the play. There is no time to explain, in every instance, exactly how Holmes arrives at his conclusions, but the explanation is there, and is as simple and easy as those that are shown.

When Mr. Gillette took the play to St. Louis, where the critical fraternity seems to be impressed with the idea that it is paid to kill off anything that is brought to that charming town, the following of Holmes's cigar in the dark was anathematized as unworthy of presentation on the American stage because of its absurdity. They finally sent the chief detective of St. Louis, undoubtedly one of the cleverest detectives in the United States, to see the piece and to tear it to pieces—particularly with reference to this cigar episode.

Next morning the officer wrote a lengthy description of the play, which appeared in the St. Louis *Star*, in which he said that the great

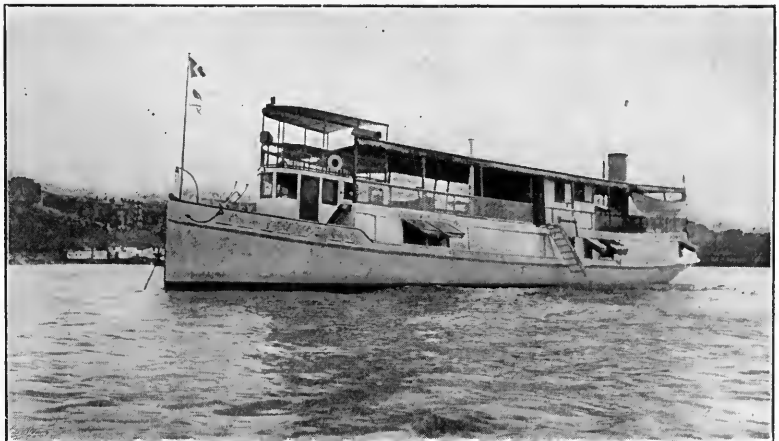
cigar-scene, at the end of the third act, where Holmes, after he has extinguished the light, put his cigar in a crevice by the window to fool his would-be captors while he makes his escape, so far from being impossible, as the critics there declared, had a parallel in his own experience. In speaking of the incident he says: "Holmes does a very neat trick in the Stepney gas-chamber scene, where, after smashing the lamp, he sticks his lighted cigar on the window-ledge. The thieves who have him trapped make a rush for the cigar, thinking thus to locate him. When a light is struck Holmes is going out of the door. To show how near fiction is to reality I will relate an actual experience in which a lighted cigar played a prominent part. During the big street-car strike some fifteen years ago, when I was a detective, we received a tip that the leader of the dynamiters, who were doing so much destruction, was in East St. Louis. I got a stool-pigeon, or snitch as they are called. He knew the fellow we suspected, and agreed to help us. This fellow, myself, and another detective went over to East St. Louis one miserable night, when the rain was coming down in torrents. The snitch told us that the leader and some of the gang were going to a house where the dynamite was stored. He was to go with the dynamiters, we to follow until we located the place. East St. Louis was not then what it is now. There were few pavements and no lights to speak of. So I made a plan by which we could keep our quarry in sight. I provided the snitch with half-a-dozen cigars and told him to keep one constantly lighted. Well, the snitch met the gang and they started out. We couldn't see a figure ten feet in front of us, so we followed the lighted cigar. All we could see, about two blocks ahead, was the little red point, the smoker holding the cigar turned back-wards in his hand frequently so we would be sure not to miss it. When about to turn a corner he struck a match, as if to get a better light. In this way we followed our

game for several miles through the slush and rain and darkness.

"When they reached the house our confederate lighted two matches. We knew what it meant. In a few minutes he came to the doorway and struck three matches in succession, which was the signal that all was ready for the arrest. We rushed in with levelled revolvers and made the gang throw up their arms. We landed them in the East St. Louis police-station, and searching the house found the dynamite stored away. So you see this little incident in the play had almost a parallel in actual experience."

What surprised the American critics most was the almost perfect personification of the literary hero. That is evidenced by comparing our photographs of the great actor with the well-known drawings of the literary detective by Mr. Sidney Paget. There is the tall, slender figure, the sallow, unhealthy face, and the eternal pipe or cigar. Mr. Gillette loves his smoke on the stage. Indeed, he seldom takes a part in a play where he cannot smoke. He is one of the very few actors who can portray different expressions and emotions in smoke. In "Sherlock Holmes" he is seen smoking a pipe, cigar, and cigarette, but they all serve some purpose.

Not a single item in the production of the famous play has escaped Mr. Gillette's personal attention, from the arrangement of the scenery to the smallest piece of furniture. The novel light effects, by which changes of scene and act are not effected by the familiar rising and descent of the curtain, but by a sort of photographic process, as if the shutter of a camera were opened and closed by the pressure of a button, deserve a passing refer-



From a]

MR. WILLIAM GILLETTE'S YACHT, "AUNT POLLY."

[Photo.

ence. Suddenly the whole theatre is plunged in darkness, and as suddenly the stage is illuminated, and, presto, the scene has entirely changed. The company have their own electric switch-board and carry their own foot and border lights; the former instrument weighs one ton. By it the electrician controls 300 incandescent lights. In the change of scenes some very rapid work is accomplished. In the second act, for instance, the change from the underground office to the apartment in Baker Street occupies some fifty seconds; yet every piece of furniture has to be removed, including the ceiling. I have witnessed some very quick changes on the stage, but never such a smart piece of work as this. With only a pilot light to guide them thirty-five men remove one scene and introduce another boasting of a number of pieces of furniture in the short space of forty-eight seconds. On inquiry I was told that at a theatre in New York the same scene was shifted in thirty-five seconds.

Off the stage Mr. Gillette leads a very simple life. His dislike for society, with its affectations, makes him all the more interesting when one recalls the same point in the character of the detective of fiction. If Mr. Gillette has any recreation at all it is yachting. His yacht is as interesting as her owner. She is what the Americans call a yacht-houseboat, and rejoices in the name of *Aunt Polly*. He told the builders what he wanted and they supplied it. In her he has cruised up and down the American coast, for she is a perfectly seaworthy craft, and on the American rivers. The engine and the quarters for the crew are well aft, thus giving plenty of space for the cabins, bathrooms, and large saloon amidships and forward.

A visitor who went over the yacht last summer made one curious remark about

her interior furnishings, namely, that it principally consisted of cushions. But the owner of the *Aunt Polly* believes in comfort, and this is apparent from our little photograph showing the fireplace and piano on board, and, incidentally, three or four of the cushions. The boat has an upper deck, and with her engine of 250 horse-power is capable of making a speed of ten knots an hour. She has a length of 140ft., a beam of 21ft., and a draught of 7½ft.

When not fulfilling engagements Mr. Gillette is either yachting or living a very lonely life in his bungalow in the South Carolina Mountains. This retreat of the playwright is at a place called The Thousand Pines, in the very heart of the "Great Smoky" range. His bungalow is deep

in the woods, about two miles from the village of Tyron. Not a tree, twig, or leaf was disturbed more than was necessary for the laying of the foundation, and so careful is Mr. Gillette to make his approaches and departure by different ways that not even a path leads through the forest to the doorway. There it is, deep among the rhododendrons and honeysuckle, with the



From a

THE CABIN ON THE "AUNT POLLY."

[Photo.

tall pines standing sentinel and the rugged sides of the great mountains hemming it off from the world. This is the spot that the living Sherlock Holmes has selected for his habitation after his contracts with theatrical managers have been fulfilled.

Mr. Gillette does not keep himself absolutely secluded in his bungalow; he often appears at the village in his long, light coat and rough cap, and there is no more approachable man than he at that time. Everyone in Tyron knows him and everyone loves him. Not as Gillette the famous actor and playwright, but as Gillette the man, the kind, good-natured, funny gentleman, who always has the right thing to say to the children, and gives everyone a word

that makes the day seem brighter just for his passing.

He will drop into a humble cottage and talk, not of the stage—for many of the people of Carolina have never seen a play, nor do they know what an actor is—but rather of their own affairs, their pleasures, and their troubles—their own little world in which they move and have their being. But there are few worlds in this world that Mr. Gillette does not know, and none that he cannot make brighter, and his visit to a cottage is never forgotten.

South Carolina is a curious retreat for a busy and successful dramatist to select. But, as in most things, there was a reason for such a choice. It was to regain his lost health after a very sad and painful event, and one which threatened to end his career, the death of his wife. At first he occupied a cottage adjoining the one in which Sidney Lanier, the famous poet - musician, lived just prior to his death. Tourists to Tyron are always welcomed at The Thousand Pines, for Mr. Gillette is the essence of courtesy.

The following little story is an instance of this, and it serves also to illustrate his wonderful quickness in accepting a situation. It seems that a famous lady tem-

perance lecturer was travelling in the district, and by some chance had stopped at Tyron, where she was being entertained by the president of the local temperance organization. Hearing of Mr. Gillette's retreat, she expressed a desire to visit it. Mr. Gillette was kindness itself in showing the lady and her companion about the house; the lounging room, with its great stone fireplace and natural shelves projecting from the rock; the kitchen, with its primitive utensils, and not even the privacy of his chamber was passed by. But, notwithstanding all this, at a moment when Mr. Gillette's back was turned the ladies

endeavoured to open surreptitiously the door of a small cabinet which stood in the room. Mr. Gillette turned just in time; in a moment he was at their side; the door was opened and a bottle of whisky produced in one hand, with glasses in another. "Ah, ladies," he said, "I am so pleased to see that you will accept a little refreshment! Allow me!"

I could write much of Mr. Gillette's courteous and practical sympathy with his fellow-actors. Always ready to lend a helping hand to a struggling colleague and to relieve distress, he has gained the respect, nay love, of those who have come in contact with him. Ask those who have acted with him, year in and year out, of Gillette—the man—and you will hear many a touching little story of a great actor who has gone out of his way to render assistance to a less fortunate individual.

Mr. Gillette is a native of Hartford, Connecticut, U.S.A. While appreciating the beauties and advantages of other countries, he nevertheless considers himself fortunate in having been born an American. Although he is over the average height, standing about 6ft. 1in., his grace and ease and utter carelessness of effect make him appear considerably less.



MR. WILLIAM GILLETTE'S RESIDENCE AT HARTFORD, CONN., U.S.A.
From a Photo.

His father was a United States Senator, a relative of the late Henry Ward Beecher and of Harriet Beecher-Stowe, the authoress of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Mr. Gillette has already played the part of Sherlock Holmes over 600 times. The play was first produced in New York, where it had a run of an entire season. It then went on tour for another theatrical season through the States. From the Lyceum it is expected to go back to New York, and from there to Australia, in which case "Sherlock Holmes" will have had an unprecedented run of over four years.

THE NEW ACCELERATOR.

BY H. G. WELLS.



CERTAINLY, if ever a man found a guinea when he was looking for a pin it is my good friend Professor Gibberne. I have heard before of investigators overshooting the mark, but never quite to the extent that he has done. He has really, this time at any rate, without any touch of exaggeration in the phrase, found something to revolutionize human life. And that, when he was simply seeking an all-round nervous stimulant to bring languid people up to the stresses of these pushful days. I have tasted the stuff now several times, and I cannot do better than describe the effect the thing had on me. That there are astonishing experiences in store for all in search of new sensations will become apparent enough.

Professor Gibberne, as many people know, is my neighbour in Folkestone. Unless my memory plays me a trick, his portrait at various ages has already appeared in *THE STRAND MAGAZINE*—I think late in 1899; but I am unable to look it up because I have lent that volume to someone who has never sent it back. The reader may, perhaps, recall the high forehead and the singularly long black eyebrows that give such a Mephistophelian touch to his face. He occupies one of those pleasant little detached houses in the mixed style that make the western end of the Upper Sandgate Road so interesting. His is the one with the Flemish gables and the Moorish portico, and it is in the little room with the mullioned bay window that he works when he is down here, and in which of an evening we have so often smoked and talked together.



He is a mighty jester, but, besides, he likes to talk to me about his work; he is one of those men who find a help and stimulus in talking, and so I have been able to follow the conception of the New Accelerator right up from a very early stage. Of course, the greater portion of his experimental work is not done in Folkestone, but in Gower Street, in the fine new laboratory next to the hospital that he

has been the first to use.

As everyone knows, or at least as all intelligent people know, the special department in which Gibberne has gained so great and deserved a reputation among physiologists is the action of drugs upon the nervous system. Upon soporifics, sedatives, and anæsthetics he is, I am told, unequalled. He is also a chemist of considerable eminence, and I suppose in the subtle and complex jungle of riddles that centres about the ganglion cell and the axis fibre there are little cleared places of his making, little glades of illumination, that, until he sees fit to publish his results, are still inaccessible to every other living man. And in the last few years he has been particularly assiduous upon this question of nervous stimulants, and already, before the discovery of the New Accelerator, very successful with them. Medical science has to thank him for at least three distinct and absolutely safe invigorators of unrivalled value to practising men. In cases of exhaustion the preparation known as Gibberne's B Syrup has, I suppose, saved more lives already than any lifeboat round the coast.

"But none of these little things begin to satisfy me yet," he told me nearly a year ago. "Either they increase the central energy without affecting the nerves or they simply increase the available energy by lowering the nervous conductivity; and all of them are unequal and local in their operation. One wakes up the heart and viscera and leaves the brain stupefied, one gets at the brain champagne fashion and does nothing good for the solar plexus, and what I want—and what, if it's an earthly possibility, I mean to have—is a stimulant that stimulates all round, that wakes you up for a time from the crown of your head to the tip of your great toe, and makes you go two—or even three to everybody else's one. Eh? That's the thing I'm after."

"It would tire a man," I said.

"Not a doubt of it. And you'd eat double or treble—and all that. But just think what the thing would mean. Imagine yourself with a little phial like this"—he held up a little bottle of green glass and marked his points with it—"and in this precious phial is the power to think twice as fast, move twice as quickly, do twice as much work in a given time as you could otherwise do."

"But is such a thing possible?"

"I believe so. If it isn't, I've wasted my time for a year. These various preparations of the hypophosphites, for example, seem to show that something of the sort. . . . Even if it was only one and a half times as fast it would do."

"It *would* do," I said.

"If you were a statesman in a corner, for example, time rushing up against you, something urgent to be done, eh?"

"He could dose his private secretary," I said.

"And gain—double time. And think if *you*, for example, wanted to finish a book."

"Usually," I said, "I wish I'd never begun 'em."

"Or a doctor, driven to death, wants to sit down and think out a case. Or a barrister—or a man cramming for an examination."

"Worth a guinea a drop," said I, "and more—to men like that."

"And in a duel, again," said Gibberne, "where it all depends on your quickness in pulling the trigger."

"Or in fencing," I echoed.

"You see," said Gibberne, "if I get it as an all-round thing it will really do you no harm at all—except perhaps to an infinitesimal degree it brings you nearer old age.

You will just have lived twice to other people's once——"

"I suppose," I meditated, "in a duel—it would be fair?"

"That's a question for the seconds," said Gibberne.

I harked back farther. "And you really think such a thing *is* possible?" I said.

"As possible," said Gibberne, and glanced at something that went throbbing by the window, "as a motor-bus. As a matter of fact——"

He paused and smiled at me deeply, and tapped slowly on the edge of his desk with the green phial. "I think I know the stuff. . . . Already I've got something coming." The nervous smile upon his face betrayed the gravity of his revelation. He rarely talked of his actual experimental work unless things were very near the end. "And it may be, it may be—I shouldn't be surprised—it may even do the thing at a greater rate than twice."

"It will be rather a big thing," I hazarded.

"It will be, I think, rather a big thing."

But I don't think he quite knew what a big thing it was to be, for all that.

I remember we had several talks about the stuff after that. "The New Accelerator" he called it, and his tone about it grew more confident on each occasion. Sometimes he talked nervously of unexpected physiological results its use might have, and then he would get a little unhappy; at others he was frankly mercenary, and we debated long and anxiously how the preparation might be turned to commercial account. "It's a good thing," said Gibberne, "a tremendous thing. I know I'm giving the world something, and I think it only reasonable we should expect the world to pay. The dignity of science is all very well, but I think somehow I must have the monopoly of the stuff for, say, ten years. I don't see why *all* the fun in life should go to the dealers in ham."

My own interest in the coming drug certainly did not wane in the time. I have always had a queer little twist towards metaphysics in my mind. I have always been given to paradoxes about space and time, and it seemed to me that Gibberne was really preparing no less than the absolute acceleration of life. Suppose a man repeatedly dosed with such a preparation: he would live an active and record life indeed, but he would be an adult at eleven, middle-aged at twenty-five, and by thirty well on the road to senile decay. It seemed to me that so far Gibberne was only going to do for anyone

who took his drug exactly what Nature has done for the Jews and Orientals, who are men in their teens and aged by fifty, and quicker in thought and act than we are all the time. The marvel of drugs has always been great to my mind; you can madden a man, calm a man, make him incredibly strong and alert or a helpless log, quicken this passion and allay that, all by means of drugs, and here was a new miracle to be added to this strange armoury of phials the doctors use! But Gibberne was far too eager upon his technical points to enter very keenly into my aspect of the question.

It was the 7th or 8th of August when he told me the distillation that would decide his failure or success for a time was going forward as we talked, and it was on the 10th that he told me the thing was done and the New Accelerator a tangible reality in the world. I met him as I was going up the Sandgate Hill towards Folkestone—I think I

"It's done," he cried, and gripped my hand, speaking very fast; "it's more than done. Come up to my house and see."

"Really?"

"Really!" he shouted. "Incredibly! Come up and see."

"And it does—twice?"

"It does more, much more. It scares me. Come up and see the stuff. Taste it! Try it! It's the most amazing stuff on earth." He gripped my arm and, walking at such a pace that he forced me into a trot, went shouting with me up the hill. A whole *char-à-banc*-ful of people turned and stared at us in unison after the manner of people in *chars-à-banc*. It was one of those hot, clear days that Folkestone sees so much of, every colour incredibly bright and every outline hard. There was a breeze of course, but not so much breeze as sufficed under these conditions to keep me cool and dry. I panted for mercy.



"I PANTED FOR MERCY."

was going to get my hair cut, and he came hurrying down to meet me—I suppose he was coming to my house to tell me at once of his success. I remember that his eyes were unusually bright and his face flushed, and I noted even then the swift alacrity of his step.

"I'm not walking fast, am I?" cried Gibberne, and slackened his pace to a quick march.

"You've been taking some of this stuff," I puffed.

"No," he said. "At the utmost a drop of water that stood in a beaker from which I

had washed out the last traces of the stuff. I took some last night, you know. But that is ancient history, now."

"And it goes twice?" I said, nearing his doorway in a grateful perspiration.

"It goes a thousand times, many thousand times!" cried Gibberne, with a dramatic gesture, flinging open his Early English carved oak gate.

"Phew!" said I, and followed him to the door.

"I don't know how many times it goes," he said, with his latch-key in his hand.

"And you——"

"It throws all sorts of light on nervous physiology, it kicks the theory of vision into a perfectly new shape! . . . Heaven knows how many thousand times. We'll try all that after—— The thing is to try the stuff now."

"Try the stuff?" I said, as we went along the passage.

"Rather," said Gibberne, turning on me in his study. "There it is in that little green phial there! Unless you happen to be afraid?"

I am a careful man by nature and only theoretically adventurous. I *was* afraid. But on the other hand there is pride.

"Well," I haggled. "You say you've tried it?"

"I've tried it," he said, "and I don't look hurt by it, do I? I don't even look livery and I feel——"

I sat down. "Give me the potion," I said. "If the worst comes to the worst it will save having my hair cut, and that I think is one of the most hateful duties of a civilized man. How do you take the mixture?"

"With water," said Gibberne, whacking down a carafe.

He stood up in front of his desk and regarded me in his easy chair; his manner was suddenly affected by a

touch of the Harley Street specialist. "It's rum stuff, you know," he said.

I made a gesture with the hand.

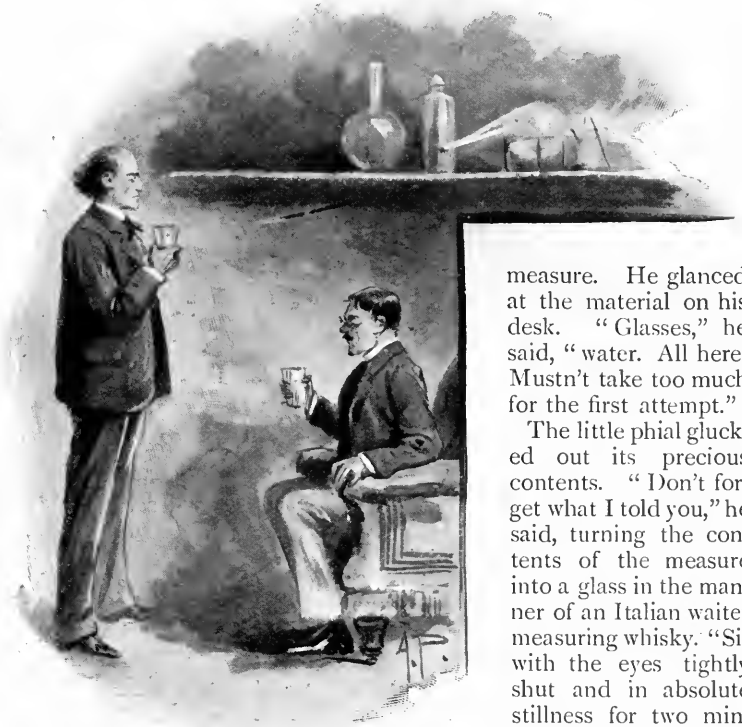
"I must warn you in the first place as soon as you've got it down to shut your eyes, and open them very cautiously in a minute or so's time. One still sees. The sense of vision is a question of length of vibration, and not of multitude of impacts; but there's a kind of shock to the retina, a nasty giddy confusion just at the time if the eyes are open. Keep 'em shut."

"Shut," I said. "Good!"

"And the next thing is, keep still. Don't begin to whack about. You may fetch something a nasty rap if you do. Remember you will be going several thousand times faster than you ever did before, heart, lungs, muscles, brain—everything—and you will hit hard without knowing it. You won't know it, you know. You'll feel just as you do now. Only everything in the world will seem to be going ever so many thousand times slower than it ever went before. That's what makes it so deuced queer."

"Lor," I said. "And you mean——"

"You'll see," said he, and took up a little



measure. He glanced at the material on his desk. "Glasses," he said, "water. All here. Mustn't take too much for the first attempt."

The little phial gluck-ed out its precious contents. "Don't forget what I told you," he said, turning the contents of the measure into a glass in the manner of an Italian waiter measuring whisky. "Sit with the eyes tightly shut and in absolute stillness for two minutes," he said. "Then you will hear mespeak."

"INSTANTLY I CLOSED MY EYES."

He added an inch or so of water to the little dose in each glass.

"By-the-bye," he said, "don't put your glass down. Keep it in your hand and rest your hand on the knee. Yes—so. And now——"

He raised his glass.

"The New Accelerator," I said.

"The New Accelerator," he answered, and we touched glasses and drank, and instantly I closed my eyes.

You know that blank non-existence into

am not sure. He glanced at the window. "Have you ever seen a curtain before a window fixed in that way before?"

I followed his eyes, and there was the end of the curtain, frozen, as it were, corner high, in the act of flapping briskly in the breeze.

"No," said I; "that's odd."

"And here," he said, and opened the hand that held the glass. Naturally I winced, expecting the glass to smash. But so far from smashing it did not even seem to stir; it hung in mid-air—motionless. "Roughly



"IT HUNG IN MID-AIR—MOTIONLESS."

which one drops when one has taken "gas." For an indefinite interval it was like that. Then I heard Gibberne telling me to wake up, and I stirred and opened my eyes. There he stood as he had been standing, glass still in hand. It was empty, that was all the difference.

"Well?" said I.

"Nothing out of the way?"

"Nothing. A slight feeling of exhilaration, perhaps. Nothing more."

"Sounds?"

"Things are still," I said. "By Jove! yes! They *are* still. Except the sort of faint pat, patter, like rain falling on different things. What is it?"

"Analyzed sounds," I think he said, but I

speaking," said Gibberne, "an object in these latitudes falls 16ft. in the first second. This glass is falling 16ft. in a second now. Only, you see, it hasn't been falling yet for the hundredth part of a second. That gives you some idea of the pace of my Accelerator." And he waved his hand round and round, over and under the slowly sinking glass. Finally he took it by the bottom, pulled it down and placed it very carefully on the table. "Eh?" he said to me, and laughed.

"That seems all right," I said, and began very gingerly to raise myself from my chair. I felt perfectly well, very light and comfortable, and quite confident in my mind. I was going fast all over. My heart, for

example, was beating a thousand times a second, but that caused me no discomfort at all. I looked out of the window. An immovable cyclist, head down and with a frozen puff of dust behind his driving-wheel, scorched to overtake a galloping *char-à-banc* that did not stir. I gaped in amazement at the incredible spectacle. "Gibberne," I cried, "how long will this confounded stuff last?"

"Heaven knows!" he answered. "Last time I took it I went to bed and slept it off. I tell you, I was frightened. It must have lasted some minutes, I think—it seemed like hours. But after a bit it slows down rather suddenly, I believe."

I was proud to observe that I did not feel frightened. I suppose because there were two of us. "Why shouldn't we go out?" I asked.

"Why not?"

"They'll see us."

"Not they. Goodness, no! Why, we shall be going a thousand times faster than the quickest conjuring trick that was ever done. Come along! Which way shall we go? Window, or door?"

And out by the window we went.

Assuredly of all the strange experiences that I have ever had, or imagined, or read of other people having or imagining, that little raid I made with Gibberne on the Folkestone Leas, under the influence of the New Accelerator, was the strangest and maddest of all. We went out by his gate into the road, and there we made a minute examination of the statuesque passing traffic. The tops of the wheels and some of the legs of the horses of this *char-à-banc*, the end of the whip-lash and the lower jaw of the conductor—who was just beginning to yawn—were perceptibly in motion, but all the rest of the lumbering conveyance seemed still. And quite noiseless except for a faint rattling that came from one man's throat! And as parts of this frozen edifice there were a driver, you know, and a conductor, and eleven people! The effect as we walked about the thing began by being madly queer and ended by being—disagreeable. There they were, people like ourselves and yet not like ourselves, frozen in careless attitudes, caught in mid-gesture. A girl and a man smiled at one another, a leering smile that threatened to last for evermore; a woman in a floppy capeline rested her arm on the rail and stared at Gibberne's house with the unwinking stare of eternity; a man stroked his moustache like a figure of wax,

and another stretched a tiresome stiff hand with extended fingers towards his loosened hat. We stared at them, we laughed at them, we made faces at them, and then a sort of disgust of them came upon us, and we turned away and walked round in front of the cyclist towards the Leas.

"Goodness!" cried Gibberne, suddenly; "look there!"

He pointed, and there at the tip of his finger and sliding down the air with wings flapping slowly and at the speed of an exceptionally languid snail—was a bee.

And so we came out upon the Leas. There the thing seemed madder than ever. The band was playing in the upper stand, though all the sound it made for us was a low-pitched, wheezy rattle, a sort of prolonged last sigh that passed at times into a sound like the slow, muffled ticking of some monstrous clock. Frozen people stood erect, strange, silent, self-conscious-looking dummies hung unstably in mid-stride, promenading upon the grass. I passed close to a little poodle dog suspended in the act of leaping and watched the slow movement of his legs as he sank to earth. "Lord, look *here!*" cried Gibberne, and we halted for a moment before a magnificent person in white faint-striped flannels, white shoes, and a Panama hat, who turned back to wink at two gaily dressed ladies he had passed. A wink, studied with such leisurely deliberation as we could afford, is an unattractive thing. It loses any quality of alert gaiety, and one remarks that the winking eye does not completely close, that under its drooping lid appears the lower edge of an eyeball and a little line of white. "Heaven give me memory," said I, "and I will never wink again."

"Or smile," said Gibberne, with his eye on the lady's answering teeth.

"It's infernally hot, somehow," said I. "Let's go slower."

"Oh, come along!" said Gibberne.

We picked our way among the bath-chairs in the path. Many of the people sitting in the chairs seemed almost natural in their passive poses, but the contorted scarlet of the bandsmen was not a restful thing to see. A purple-faced little gentleman was frozen in the midst of a violent struggle to refold his newspaper against the wind; there were many evidences that all these people in their sluggish way were exposed to a considerable breeze, a breeze that had no existence so far as our sensations went. We came out and walked a little way from the

crowd, and turned and regarded it. To see all that multitude changed to a picture, smitten rigid, as it were, into the semblance of realistic wax, was impossibly wonderful. It was absurd, of course; but it filled me with an irrational, an exultant sense of superior advantage. Consider the wonder of it! All that I had said, and thought, and done since the stuff had begun to work in my veins had happened, so far as those people, so far as the world in general went, in the twinkling of an eye. "The New Accelerator——" I began, but Gibberne interrupted me.

"There's that infernal old woman!" he said.

"What old woman?"

"Lives next door to me," said Gibberne. "Has a lapdog that yaps. Gods! The temptation is strong!"

There is something very boyish and impulsive about Gibberne at times. Before I could expostulate with him he had dashed forward, snatched the unfortunate animal out of visible existence, and was running violently with it towards the cliff of the Leas. It was most extraordinary. The little brute, you know, didn't bark or wriggle or make the slightest sign of vitality. It kept quite stiffly in an attitude of somnolent repose, and Gibberne

thing else. "If you run like that, Gibberne," I cried, "you'll set your clothes on fire. Your linen trousers are going brown as it is!"

He clapped his hand on his thigh and stood hesitating on the verge. "Gibberne," I cried, coming up, "put it down. This heat is too much! It's our running so! Two or three miles a second! Friction of the air!"

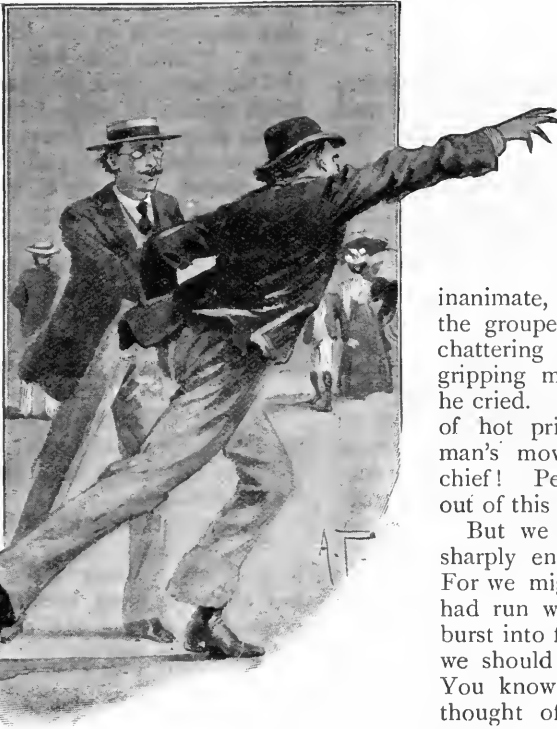
"What?" he said, glancing at the dog.

"Friction of the air," I shouted. "Friction of the air. Going too fast. Like meteorites and things. Too hot. And, Gibberne! Gibberne! I'm all over pricking and a sort of perspiration. You can see people stirring slightly. I believe the stuff's working off! Put that dog down."

"Eh?" he said.

"It's working off," I repeated. "We're too hot and the stuff's working off! I'm wet through."

He stared at me. Then at the band, the wheezy rattle of whose performance was certainly going faster. Then



with a tremendous sweep of the arm he hurled the dog away from him and it went spinning upward, still inanimate, and hung at last over the grouped parasols of a knot of chattering people. Gibberne was gripping my elbow. "By Jove!" he cried. "I believe it is! A sort of hot pricking and—yes. That man's moving his pocket-handkerchief! Perceptibly. We must get out of this sharp."

But we could not get out of it sharply enough. Luckily perhaps! For we might have run, and if we had run we should, I believe, have burst into flames. Almost certainly we should have burst into flames! You know we had neither of us thought of that. . . . But before we could even begin to run the action of the drug had ceased.

It was the business of a minute fraction of a second. The effect of the New Accelerator passed like the drawing of a curtain, vanished in the movement of a hand.

"WITH A TREMENDOUS SWEEP OF THE ARM HE HURLED THE DOG AWAY FROM HIM."

held it by the neck. It was like running about with a dog of wood. "Gibberne," I cried, "put it down!" Then I said some-

I heard Gibberne's voice in infinite alarm. "Sit down," he said, and flop, down upon the turf at the edge of the Leas I sat—scorching as I sat. There is a patch of burnt grass there still where I sat down. The whole stagnation seemed to wake up as I did so, the disarticulated vibration of the band rushed together into a blast of music, the promenaders put their feet down and walked their ways, the papers and flags began flapping, smiles passed into words, the winker finished his wink and went on his way complacently, and all the seated people moved and spoke.

The whole world had come alive again, was going as fast as we were, or rather we were going no faster than the rest of the world. It was like slowing down as one comes into a railway station.

Everything seemed to spin round for a second or two, I had the most transient feeling of nausea, and that was all. And the little dog which had seemed to hang for a moment when the force of Gibberne's arm was expended fell with a swift acceleration clean through a lady's parasol!

That was the saving of us. Unless it was for one corpulent old gentleman in a bath-chair, who certainly did start at the sight of us and afterwards regarded us at intervals with a darkly suspicious eye, and, finally, I believe, said something to his nurse about us, I doubt if a solitary person remarked our sudden appearance among them. Plop! We must have appeared abruptly. We ceased to smoulder almost at once, though the turf beneath me was uncomfortably hot. The attention of everyone—including even the Amusements' Association band, which on this occasion, for the only time in its history,

got out of tune—was arrested by the amazing fact, and the still more amazing yapping and uproar caused by the fact, that a respectable, over-fed lapdog sleeping quietly to the east of the bandstand should suddenly fall through the parasol of a lady on the west—in a slightly singed condition due to the extreme velocity of its movements through the air. In these absurd days, too, when we are all trying to be as psychic, and silly, and superstitious as possible! People got up and trod on other people, chairs were overturned, the Leas policeman ran. How the matter settled itself I do not know—we were much too anxious to disentangle ourselves from the affair and get out of range of the eye of the old gentleman in the bath-chair to



"PEOPLE GOT UP AND TROD ON OTHER PEOPLE."

make minute inquiries. As soon as we were sufficiently cool and sufficiently recovered from our giddiness and nausea and confusion of mind to do so we stood up and, skirting the crowd, directed our steps back along the road below the Metropole towards Gibberne's house. But amidst the din I heard very

distinctly the gentleman who had been sitting beside the lady of the ruptured sunshade using quite unjustifiable threats and language to one of those chair-attendants who have "Inspector" written on their caps. "If you didn't throw the dog," he said, "who *did*?"

The sudden return of movement and familiar noises, and our natural anxiety about ourselves (our clothes were still dreadfully hot, and the fronts of the thighs of Gibberne's white trousers were scorched a drabish brown), prevented the minute observations I should have liked to make on all these things. Indeed, I really made no observations of any scientific value on that return. The bee, of course, had gone. I looked for that cyclist, but he was already out of sight as we came into the Upper Sandgate Road or hidden from us by traffic; the *char-à-banc*, however, with its people now all alive and stirring, was clattering along at a spanking pace almost abreast of the nearer church.

We noted, however, that the window-sill on which we had stepped in getting out of the house was slightly singed, and that the impressions of our feet on the gravel of the path were unusually deep.

So it was I had my first experience of the New Accelerator. Practically we had been running about and saying and doing all sorts of things in the space of a second or so of time. We had lived half an hour while the band had played, perhaps, two bars. But the effect it had upon us was that the whole world had stopped for our convenient inspection. Considering all things, and particularly considering our rashness in venturing out of the house, the experience might certainly have been much more disagreeable than it was. It showed, no doubt, that Gibberne has still much to learn before his preparation is a manageable convenience, but its practicability it certainly demonstrated beyond all cavil.

Since that adventure he has been steadily bringing its use under control, and I have several times, and without the slightest bad result, taken measured doses under his direction; though I must confess I have not yet ventured abroad again while under its influence. I may mention, for example, that this story has been written at one sitting and without interruption, except for the nibbling of some chocolate, by its means. I began at 6.25, and my watch is now very nearly at

the minute past the half-hour. The convenience of securing a long, uninterrupted spell of work in the midst of a day full of engagements cannot be exaggerated. Gibberne is now working at the quantitative handling of his preparation, with especial reference to its distinctive effects upon different types of constitution. He then hopes to find a Retarder with which to dilute its present rather excessive potency. The Retarder will, of course, have the reverse effect to the Accelerator; used alone it should enable the patient to spread a few seconds over many hours of ordinary time, and so to maintain an apathetic inaction, a glacier-like absence of alacrity, amidst the most animated or irritating surroundings. The two things together must necessarily work an entire revolution in civilized existence. It is the beginning of our escape from that Time Garment of which Carlyle speaks. While this Accelerator will enable us to concentrate ourselves with tremendous vigour upon any moment or occasion that demands our utmost sense and vigour, the Retarder will enable us to pass in passive tranquillity through infinite hardship and tedium. Perhaps I am a little optimistic about the Retarder, which has indeed still to be discovered, but about the Accelerator there is no possible sort of doubt whatever. Its appearance upon the market in a convenient, controllable, and assimilable form is a matter of the next few months. It will be obtainable of all chemists and druggists, in small green bottles, at a high but, considering its extraordinary qualities, by no means excessive price. Gibberne's Nervous Accelerator it will be called, and he hopes to be able to supply it in three strengths: one in 200, one in 900, and one in 2,000, distinguished by yellow, pink, and white labels respectively.

No doubt its use renders a great number of very extraordinary things possible; for, of course, the most remarkable and, possibly, even criminal proceedings may be effected with impunity by thus dodging, as it were, into the interstices of time. Like all potent preparations it will be liable to abuse. We have, however, discussed this aspect of the question very thoroughly, and we have decided that this is purely a matter of medical jurisprudence and altogether outside our province. We shall manufacture and sell the Accelerator, and, as for the consequences—we shall see.



BY FRANK T. BULLEN, F.R.G.S.

PROBABLY few of the thinking inhabitants of dry land, with all their craving for tales of the marvellous, the gloomy, and the gigantic, have in these later centuries of the world's history given much thought to the conditions of constant warfare existing beneath the surface of the ocean. As readers of ancient classics well know, the fathers of literature gave much attention to the vast, awe-inspiring inhabitants of the sea, investing and embellishing the few fragments of fact concerning them which were available with a thousand fantastic inventions of their own naïve imaginations, until there emerged—chief and ruler of them all—the Kraken, Leviathan, or whatever other local name was considered to best convey in one word their accumulated ideas of terror. In lesser degree, but still worthy compeers of the fire-breathing dragon and sky-darkening “Rukh” of earth and sky, a worthy host of attendant sea-monsters were conjured up, until, apart from the terror of loneliness, of irresistible fury, and instability that the sea presented to primitive peoples, the awful nature of its supposed inhabitants made the contemplation of an ocean journey sufficient to appal the stoutest heart.

A better understanding of this aspect of the sea to early voyagers may be obtained from some of the artistic efforts of those days than from anything else. There you shall see gigantic creatures with human faces, teeth like foot-long wedges, armour-plated bodies, and massive feet fitted with claws like scythe-blades calmly issuing from the waves to prey upon the dwellers on the margin, or devouring with much apparent enjoyment ships with their crews, as a child crunches a stick of barley-sugar. Even such innocent-looking animals as the seals were distorted and decorated until the contemplation of their counterfeit presentment is sufficient to give a healthy man the nightmare, whilst such monsters as really were so terrible of aspect that they could hardly be “improved” upon were increased in size until they resembled islands whereon whole tribes might live. To these chimeras were credited all natural phenomena such as waterspouts, whirlpools, and the upheaval of submarine volcanoes. Some imaginative peoples went even farther than that by attributing the support of the whole earth to a vast sea-monster, while others, like the ancient Jews, fondly pictured Leviathan awaiting in the solitude and gloom of ocean's depths the glad day of Israel's reunion, when the mountain ranges of his flesh would be ready to furnish forth the family feast for all the myriads of Abraham's children.

Surely we may pause awhile to contemplate the overmastering courage of the earliest seafarers who, in spite of all these terrors, unappalled by the comparison between their tiny shallops and the mighty waves that towered above them, set boldly out from shore into the unknown, obeying that deeply-rooted instinct of migration which has peopled every habitable part of the earth's surface. Those who remember their childhood's dread of the dark, with its possible population of bogeys, who have ever been lost in early youth in some lonely place, can have some dim conception — though only a dim one, after all — of the inward battle these ancients fought and won until it became possible for the epigram to be written most truly :—

The seas but join
the nations they
divide.

But after all we are not now concerned with the warlike doings of men. It is with the actualities of submarine struggle we wish to deal, those wars without an armistice, where to be defeated is to be devoured, and from the sea-shouldering whale down to the smallest sea insect every living thing is carnivorous, dependent directly upon the flesh of its neighbours for its own life, and incapable of altruism in any form whatever, except among certain of the mammalia and sharks. In dealing with the more heroic phases of this unending warfare, then, it must be said once for all that the ancient writers had a great deal of reason on their side. They distorted and exaggerated, of course, as all children do, but they did not disbelieve. But moderns, rushing to the opposite

extreme, have neglected the marvels of the sea by the simple process of disbelieving in them, except in the case of *the* sea-serpent, that myth which seems bound to persist for ever and ever. Only of late years have the savants of the world allowed themselves to be convinced of the existence of a far more wondrous monster than the sea-serpent (if that "loathly worm" were a reality), the original kraken of old-world legends.

Hugest of all the mollusca, whose prevailing characteristics are ugliness, ferocity, and unappeasable hunger, he has lately asserted himself so firmly that current imaginative literature bristles with allusions to him, albeit oftentimes in situations where he could by no possibility be found. No matter, he has supplied a long-felt want, but the curious fact remains that he is not a discovery, but a reappearance. The gigantic cuttle-fish of actual, indisputable fact is in all respects except size the kraken; and any faithful representation of him will justify the assertion that no imagination could add anything to the terror-breeding potentialities of his aspect. That is so, even when he is viewed by the light of day in the helplessness of death, or disabling sickness, or in the invincible grip of his only conqueror. In his proper realm, crouching far below the surface of the sea in some coral cave or labyrinth of rocks, he must present a sight so awful that the imagination recoils before it. For, consider him but a little. He possesses a cylindrical body reaching, in the largest specimens yet recorded as having been seen,



"THE EARLIEST SEAFARERS SET BOLDLY OUT FROM SHORE."

extreme, have neglected the marvels of the sea by the simple process of disbelieving in them, except in the case of *the* sea-serpent, that myth which seems bound to persist for ever and ever. Only of late years have the savants of the world allowed themselves to be convinced of the existence of a far more wondrous monster than the sea-serpent (if that "loathly worm" were a reality), the original kraken of old-world legends.

a length of between 60ft. and 70ft., with an average girth of half that amount. That is to say, considerably larger than a Pullman railway-car.

Now, this immense mass is of boneless, gelatinous matter capable of much greater distension than the body of a snake, so that in the improbable event of his obtaining an extra-abundant supply of food it is competent to swell to the occasion, and still give the flood of digestive juices that it secretes full opportunity to dispose of the burden with almost incredible rapidity. Now, the apex of this mighty cylinder—I had almost said “tail,” but remembered that it would give a wrong impression, since it is the part of the monster that always comes first when he is moving from place to place—is conical: that is to say, it tapers off to a blunt point something like a Whitehead torpedo. Near this apex there is a broad fin-like arrangement looking much like the body of a skate without its tail, which, however, is used strictly for steering purposes only.

So far, there is nothing particularly striking about the appearance of this vast cylinder except in colour. This characteristic varies in different individuals, but is always reminiscent of the hues of a very light-coloured leopard; that is to say, the ground is of a livid greenish white, while the detail is in splashes and spots of lurid red and yellow, with an occasional nimbus of pale blue around these deeper markings. But it is the head of the monster that appals. Nature would seem, in the construction of this greatest of all mollusca, to have combined every weapon of offence possessed by the rest of the animal kingdom in one amazing arsenal, disposing them in such a manner that not only are they capable of terrific destruction, but their appearance defies adequate description.

The trunk at the head end is sheath-like, its terminating edges forming a sort of collar around the vast cable of muscles without a fragment of bone that connect it with the head. Through a large opening within this collar is pumped a jet of water, the pressure of which upon the surrounding sea is sufficiently great to drive the whole bulk of the creature, weighing perhaps sixty or seventy tons, *backward* through the water at the rate of sixteen to twenty miles per hour. Not in steady progression, of course, but by successive leaps. At will, this propelling jet is deeply stained with sepia, a dark brown, inky fluid, that, mingling with the encom-

passing sea, fills all the neighbourhood of the monster with a gloom so deep that nothing save one of its own species can see either to fight or whither to fly. The head itself is of proportionate size. It is rounded underneath and of much lighter hue than the trunk. On either side of it is set an eye of such dimensions that the mere statement of them sounds like the efforts of one of those grand old mediæval romancers whose sole object was to make their readers' flesh creep.

It is perfectly safe to say that, even in proportion to size, no other known creature has such organs of vision as the cuttle-fish, for the pupils of such a one as I am now describing are fully 2ft. in diameter. They are perfectly black, with a dead white rim, and cannot be closed. No doubt their enormous size is for the purpose of enabling their possessor to discern what is going on amidst the thick darkness that he himself has raised, so that while all other organisms are groping blindly in the gloom, he may work his will among them. Then come the weapons which give the cuttle-fish its power of destruction, the arms or tentacles. These are not eight in number as in the octopus, an ugly beast enough and spiteful withal, but a babe of innocence compared with our present subject. Every school-boy should know that *octopus* signifies an eight-armed or eight-footed creature, and yet in nine cases out of ten where writers of fiction and would-be teachers of fact are describing the deadly doings of the gigantic cuttle-fish they call *him* an octopus, whereas he is nothing of the kind. For in addition to the eight arms which the octopus possesses the cuttle-fish flaunts two, each of which is double the length of the other eight, making him a *decapod*. This confusion is the more unpardonable because even the most ancient of scribes always spoke of this mollusc as the “ten-armed one,” while a reference to any standard work on natural history will show even the humbler cuttle-fish with their full complement of arms; that is, ten. But this is digression.

Our friend, then, has ten arms springing from the crown of his head, of which eight are about 40ft. in length and two are 70ft. to 80ft. The eight each taper outward from the head, from the thickness of a stout man's body at the base to the slenderness of a whip-lash at the end. On their inner sides they are studded with saucer-like hollows, each of which has a fringe of curving claws set just within its rim. So that in addition to their power of holding on to anything they touch

by a suction so severe that it would strip flesh from bone, these cruel claws, large as those of a full-grown tiger, get to work upon the subject being held, lacerating and tearing until the quivering body yields up its innermost secrets. Each of these destroying, serpent-like arms is also gifted with an almost independent power of volition. Whatever it touches it holds with an unreleasable grip, but with wonderful celerity it brings its prey inwards to where in the centre of all those infernal purveyors lies a black chasm whose edges are shaped like the upper and lower mandibles of a parrot, and these complete the work so well begun.

The outliers, those two far-reaching tentacles, unlike the busy eight, are comparatively slender from their bases to within 2ft. or so of their ends. There they expand into broad, paddle-like masses thickly studded with *acetabule*, those holding, suck-

whereof every line is alive to hold and tear. Its digestion is like a furnace of dissolution needing a continual inflow of flesh, and nothing living that inhabits the sea comes amiss to its never-satisfied cravings. It is very near the apex of the pyramid of interdependence into which sea-life is built, but not quite. For at the summit is the sperm whale, the monarch of all seas, whom man alone is capable of meeting in fair fight and overcoming.

The head of the sperm whale is of heroic size, being in bulk quite one-third of the entire body, but in addition to its size it has characteristics that fit it peculiarly to compete with such a dangerous monster as the gigantic decapod. Imagine a solid block of crude india-rubber, between 20ft. and 30ft. in length and 8ft. through, in shape not at all unlike a railway carriage, but perfectly smooth in surface. Fit this mass beneath with a

movable shaft of solid bone 20ft. in length studded with teeth, each protruding 9in. and resembling the points of an elephant's tusks. You will then have a fairly complete notion of the equipment with which the ocean monarch goes into battle against the kraken. And behind it lies the warm blood of the mammal, the massive framework of bone belonging to the highly-developed vertebrate animal, governed by a brain impelled by irresistible instinct to seek its sustenance where alone it can be found in sufficiently satisfying bulk. And there for you are the outlines of the highest form of animal warfare existing within our ken—a conflict of Titans, to which a combat between elephants and rhinoceri in the jungle is but as the play of school-boys compared with the gladiatorial combats of Ancient Rome.

This somewhat lengthy preamble is necessary

in order to clear the way for an account of the proceedings leading up to the final subjugation of the huge mollusca of the elder slime to the needs of the great vertebrates



"THIS NIGHTMARE MONSTROSITY CROUCHES IN THE DARKLING DEPTHS OF OCEAN."

ing discs that garnish the inner arms for their entire length. So, thus armed, this nightmare monstrosity crouches in the darkling depths of ocean like some unimaginable web

like the whales, who were gradually emerging into a higher development, and, finding new wants oppressing them, had to obey the universal law and fight for the satisfaction of their urgent needs. Fortunately the period with which we have to deal was before chronology, so that we are not hampered by dates, and as the disposition of sea and land, except in its main features, was altogether different to what we have long been accustomed to regard as the always existing geographical order of things, we need not be greatly troubled by place considerations either.

What must be considered as the first beginning of the long struggle occurred when some predecessors of the present sperm whales, wandering through the vast morasses and among the sombre forests of that earlier world, were compelled to recognise that the conditions of shore life were rapidly becoming too onerous for them. Their immensely weighty bodies lumbering slowly as a seal does over the rugged land surface handicapped them more and more in the universal business of life, the procuring of food. Not only so, but as by reason of their slowness they were confined for hunting-grounds to a very limited area, the slower organisms upon which their vast appetites were fed grew scarcer and scarcer in spite of the fecundity of that prolific time. And in proportion as they found it more and more difficult to get a living, so did their enemies grow more numerous and bolder. Vast dragon-like shapes, clad in complete armour that clanged as the wide-spreading bat-wings bore them swiftly through the air, descended upon the sluggish whales, and with horrid rending by awful shear-shaped jaws, plentifully furnished with foot-long teeth, speedily stripped from their gigantic bodies the masses of succulent flesh. Other enemies weird of shape and swift of motion, although confined to the earth, fastened also upon the easily attainable prey that provided flesh in such bountiful abundance and was unable to fight or flee.

Well was it, then, for the whales that, living always near the sea, they had formed aquatic habits, finding in the limpid element a medium wherein their huge bulk was rather a help than a hindrance to them. Gradually they grew to use the land less and less as they became more and more accustomed to the food provided in plenty by the inexhaustible ocean; continual practice enabled them to husband the supplies of air which they took in on the surface for use beneath the waves; and, better still,

they found that, whereas they had been victims to many a monster on land whose proportions and potentialities seemed far inferior to their own, here, in their new element, they were supreme—nothing living but fled from before them.

But presently a strange thing befell them. As they grew less and less inclined to use the dry land they found that their powers of locomotion thereon gradually became less and less until at last their hind legs dwindled away and disappeared. Their vast and far-reaching tails lost their length and their bones spread out laterally into flexible fans of toughest gristle, with which they could propel themselves through the waves at speeds to which their swiftest progress upon land had been but a snail's crawl. Also their fore-legs grew shorter and wider, and the separation of the toes disappeared, until all that was left of these once ponderous supports were elegant fan-like flippers of gristle, of not the slightest use for propulsion, but merely acting as steadying vanes to keep the whole great structure in its proper position according to the will of the owner.

All these radical physical changes, however, had not affected the real classification of the whales. They were still mammals, still retained in the element which was now entirely their habitat the high organization belonging to the great carnivora of the land. Therefore, it took them no long period of time to realize that in the ocean they would be paramount; that with the tremendous facilities for rapid movement afforded them by their new element they were able to maintain that supremacy against all comers, unless their formidable armed jaws should also become modified by degeneration into some such harmless cavities for absorbing food as were possessed by their distant relatives the mysticetæ, or toothless whales.

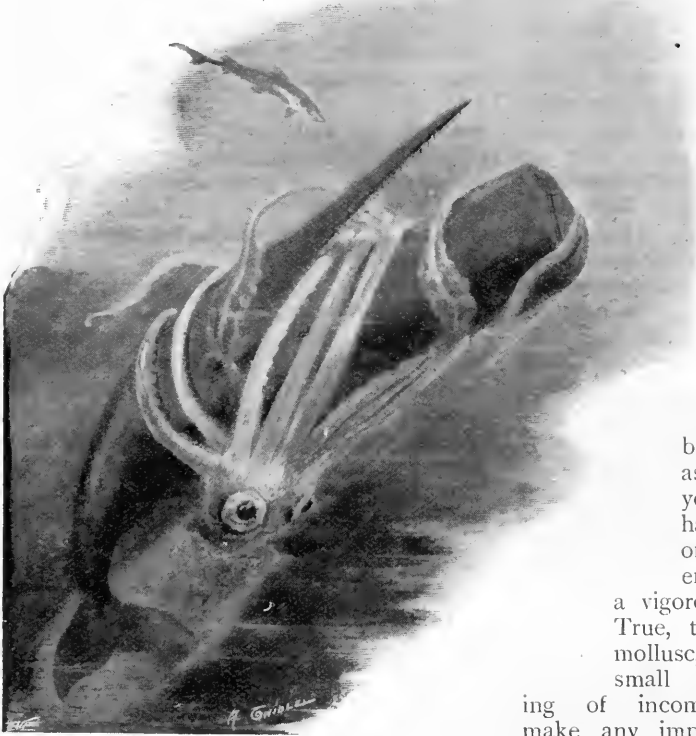
With a view to avoiding any such disaster they made good use of their jaws, having been taught by experience that the simple but effectual penalty for the neglect of any function, whether physical or mental, was the disappearance of the organs whereby such functions had been performed. But their energetic use of teeth and jaws had a result entirely unforeseen by them. Gradually the prey they sought, the larger fish and smaller sea-mammals, disappeared from the shallow seas adjacent to the land from whence the whales had been driven. And in order to satisfy the demands of their huge stomachs they were fain to follow their prey into deeper and deeper waters, meeting as they went with

other and stranger denizens of those mysterious depths, until at last the sperm whale met the kraken. There in his native gloom, vast, formless, and insatiable, brooded the awful Thing. Spread like a living net whereof every mesh was armed, sensitive and lethal, this fantastic complication of horrors took toll of all the sea-folk, needing not to

sateless foe had made him neglect any of those precautions that weaker organisms had provided themselves with; and even the cloud of sepia with which all the race were provided, and which often assisted the innocent and weaker members of the same great family to escape, was only used by these masters of the sea to hide their monstrous lures from their prey.

Thus on a momentous day a ravenous sperm whale, hunting eagerly for wherewithal to satisfy his craving, suddenly found himself encircled by many long, cable-like arms. They clung, they tore, they sucked. But whenever a stray end of them flung itself across the bristling parapet of the whale's lower jaw it was promptly bitten off, and, a portion having found its way down into the craving stomach of the big mammal, it was welcomed as good beyond all other food yet encountered. Once this had been realized, what had originally been an accidental entrapping changed itself into a vigorous onslaught and banquet. True, the darkness fought for the mollusc, but that advantage was small compared with the feeling

of incompetence, of inability to make any impression upon this mighty, impervious mass that was moving as freely amid the clinging embarrassments of those hitherto invincible arms as if they were only fronds of seaweed. And then the foul mass of the kraken found itself, contrary to all previous experience, rising involuntarily, being compelled to leave its infernal shades, and without any previous preparation for such a change of pressure to visit the upper air. The fact was that the whale, finding its stock of air exhausted, had put forth a supreme effort to rise, and found that although unable to free himself from those enormous cables he was actually competent to raise the whole mass. What an upheaval! Even the birds that, allured by the strong carrion scent, were assembling in their thousands fled



"THE SPERM WHALE MET THE KRAKEN."

pursue its prey, needing only to lie still, devour, and grow. Sometimes moved by mysterious impulses one of these chimeras would rise to the sea-surface and bask in the beams of the offended sun, poisoning the surrounding air with its charnel-house odours, and occasionally finding within the never-resting, nervous clutching of its tentacles some specimens of the highest, latest product of Creation, man himself. Ages of such experiences as these had left the kraken defenceless as to his body. The absence of any necessity for exertion had arrested the development of a backbone; the inability of any of the sea-people to retaliate upon their

away from that appalling vision, their wild screams of affright filling the air with lamentation. The tormented sea foamed and boiled in wide-spreading whirls, its deep sweet blue changed into an unhealthy non-descript tint of muddy yellow. Then the whale, having renewed his store of air, settled down seriously to the demolition of his prize.



"THE WHALE SETTLED DOWN SERIOUSLY TO THE DEMOLITION OF HIS PRIZE."

Length after length of tentacle was torn away from the central crown and swallowed, gliding down the abysmal throat of the gratified mammal in snaky convolutions until even his great store-room would contain no more.

The vanquished kraken lay helplessly rolling upon the wave, while its conqueror in satisfied ease lolled near watching with good-humoured complacency the puny assaults made upon that island of gelatinous flesh by the multitude of smaller hungry things. The birds returned reassured, and added by their

clamour to the strangeness of the scene where the tribes of air and sea, self-bidden to the enormous banquet, were making full use of their exceptional privilege. So the great feast continued, while the red sun went down and the white moon rose in placid beauty. Yet, for all the combined assaults of those hungry multitudes, the tenacious life of that

largest of living things lay so deeply seated that when the rested whale resumed his attentions he found the body of his late antagonist still quivering under the attack of his tremendous jaws. Still, its proportions were so immense that his utmost efforts left store sufficient for at least a dozen of his companions, had they been there, to have satisfied their hunger upon. And satisfied at last he turned away, allowing the smaller fry, who had waited his pleasure most respectfully, to close in again and finish the work he had so well begun.

Now this was a momentous discovery indeed. For the sperm whales had experienced, even when fish and seals were plentiful, great difficulty in procuring sufficient food at one time for a full meal, and

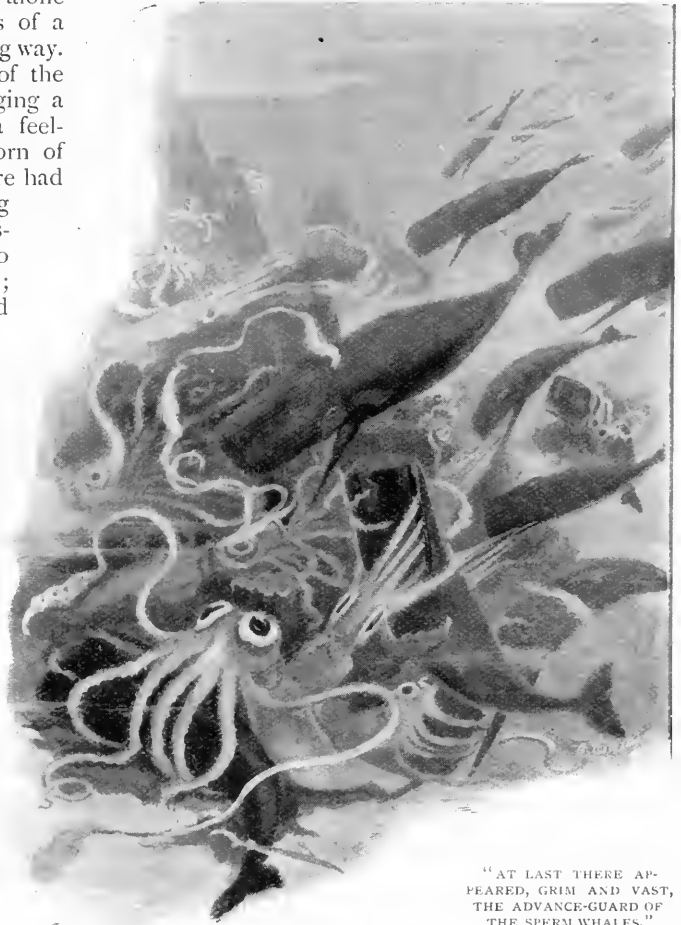
the problem of how to provide for themselves as they grew and multiplied had become increasingly hard to solve. Therefore, this discovery filled the fortunate pioneer with triumph, for his high instincts told him that he had discovered a new source of supply that promised to be inexhaustible. So, in the manner common to his people, he wasted no time in convening a gathering of them as large as could be collected. Far over the glassy surface of that quiet sea lay gently rocking a multitude of vast black bodies,

all expectant, all awaiting the momentous declaration presently to be made. The epoch-making news circulated among them in perfect silence, for to them has from the earliest times been known the secret that is only just beginning to glimmer upon the verge of human intelligence, the ability to communicate with one another without the aid of speech, sight, or touch: a kind of thought-transference, if such an idea as animal thought may be held allowable. And having thus learned of the treasures held in trust for them by the deep waters they separated and went, some alone and some in compact parties of a dozen or so, upon their rejoicing way.

But among the slimy hosts of the gigantic mollusca there was raging a sensation unknown before: a feeling of terror, of insecurity born of the knowledge that at last there had appeared among them a being proof against the utmost pressure of their awful arms, who was too great to be devoured; who on the other hand had evinced a greedy partiality for devouring them. How this information became common property among them it is impossible to say, since they dwelt alone each in his own particular lair, rigidly respected by one another, because any intrusion upon another's domains was invariably followed by the absorption of either the intruder or the intruded upon by the stronger of the two. This, although not intended by them, had the effect of vastly heightening the fear with which they were regarded by the smaller sea-folk, for they took to a restless prowling along the sea-bed, enwreathing themselves about the mighty bases of the islands and invading cool, coral caverns where their baleful presence had been till then unknown. Never before had there been such a panic among the multitudinous sea-populations. What could this new portent signify? Were the foundations of the great deep again about to be broken up and the sea-bed heaved upward

to replace the tops of the towering mountains on dry land? There was no reply, for there were none that could answer questions like these.

Still the fear-smitten decapods wandered, seeking seclusion from the coming enemy and finding none to their mind. Still the crowds of their victims rushed blindly from shoal to shoal, plunging into depths unfitted for them, or rising into shallows where their natural food was not. And the whole sea was troubled. Until at last there appeared,



"AT LAST THERE APPEARED, GRIM AND VAST, THE ADVANCE-GUARD OF THE SPERM WHALES."

grim and vast, the advance-guard of the sperm whales and hurled themselves with joyful anticipation upon the shrinking convolutions of those hideous monsters that had so long dominated the dark places of the sea.

For the whales it was a time of feasting hitherto without parallel. Without any fear,

uncaring to take even the most elementary precautions against a defeat which they felt to be an impossible contingency, they sought out and devoured one after another of these vast uglinesses, already looked upon by them as their natural provision, their store of food accumulated of purpose against their coming. Occasionally, it is true, some rash youngster, full of pride and rejoicing in his pre-eminence over all life in the depths, would hurl himself into a smoky network of far-spreading tentacles, which would wrap him round so completely that his jaws were fast bound together, his flukes would vainly essay to propel him anywhither, and he would presently perish miserably, his cable-like sinews falling slackly and his lungs suffused with crimson brine. Even then, the advantage gained by the triumphant kraken was a barren one, for in every case the bulk of the victim was too great, his body too firm in its build for the victor, despite his utmost efforts, to succeed in devouring his prize. So that the disappointed kraken had perforce to witness the gradual disappearance of his lawful prize beneath the united efforts of myriads of tiny sea-scavengers, secure in their insignificance against any attack from him, and await with tremors extending to the remotest extremity of every tentacle the retribution which, he felt sure, would speedily follow.

This desultory warfare was waged for long until, driven by despair to a community of interest unknown before, the krakens gradually sought one another out with but a single idea—that of combining against the new enemy. For, knowing to what an immense size their kind could attain in the remoter fastnesses of ocean, they could not yet bring themselves to believe that they were to become the helpless prey of these newcomers, visitors of yesterday, coming from the cramped acreage of the land into the limitless fields of ocean, and invading the immemorial freeholds of its hitherto unassailable sovereigns.

From the remotest recesses of ocean they came, that grisly gathering, came in ever-increasing hosts, their silent progress spreading unprecedented dismay among the fairer inhabitants of the sea. Figure to yourselves, if you can, the advance of this terrible army! But the effort is vain. Not even Martin, that frenzied delineator of the frightful halls of Hell, the terrors of the Apocalypse, and the agonies of the Deluge, could have done justice to the terrors of such a picture. Only dimly can we imagine what must have

been the appearance of those vast masses of writhing flesh, as through the palely gleaming phosphorescence of those depths they sped backwards in leaps of a hundred fathoms each, their terrible arms, close clustered together, streaming behind them like Medusa's hair magnified ten thousand times in size, and with each snaky tress bearing a thousand mouths instead of one.

So they converged upon the place of meeting—an area of the sea-bed nowhere more than 500 fathoms in depth, from whose rugged floor rose irregularly stupendous columnar masses of lava, hurled upwards by the cosmic forces below in a state of incandescence, and solidified as they rose, assuming many fantastic shapes and affording perfect harbourage to such dire scourges of the sea as were now making the place their rendezvous. For, strangely enough, this marvellous portion of the submarine world was more densely peopled with an infinite variety of sea folk than any other. Its tepid waters seemed to bring forth abundantly of all kinds of fish, crustacea, and creeping things. Sharks in all their fearsome varieties prowled greedily about scenting for dead things whereon to gorge; shell-fish, from the infinitesimal globigerina up to the gigantic tridacna, whose shells were a yard each in diameter; crabs, lobsters, and other freakish varieties of crustacea of a size and ugliness unknown to-day lurked in every crevice, while about and among all these scavengers flitted the happy, lovely fish in myriads of glorious hues, matching the tender shades of the coral groves that sprang from the summits of those sombre pillars beneath. Hitherto this happy hunting-ground had not been invaded by the sea-mammals. None of the air-breathing inhabitants of the ocean had ventured into its gloomy depths or sought their prey among the blazing shallows of the surface reefs, although no more favourable place for their exertions could possibly have been selected over all the wide seas. It had long been a favourite haunt of the kraken, for whom it was, as aforesaid, an ideal spot; but now it was to witness a sight unparalleled in ocean history. Heralded by an amazing series of under waves, the gathering of monsters grew near. They numbered many thousands, and no one in all their hosts was of lesser magnitude than sixty feet long by thirty in girth of body alone. From that size they increased until some, the acknowledged leaders, discovered themselves like islands, their cylindrical carcasses huge

as that of an ocean liner and their tentacles capable of overspreading an entire village.

In concentric rings they assembled, all heads pointing outward, the mightiest within, and four clear avenues through the circles left for coming and going. Contrary to custom, but by mutual consent, all the tentacles lay closely arranged in parallel lines, not outspread to every quarter of the compass and all a-work. They looked indeed in their inertia and silence like nothing so much as an incalculable number of dead squid of enormous size neatly laid out at the whim of some giant's fancy. Yet communication between them was active, a subtle interchange of experiences and plans went briskly on through the medium of the mobile element around them. The elder and mightier were full of disdain at the reports they were furnished with, utterly incredulous as to the ability of any created thing to injure them, and as the time wore on an occasional tremor was distinctly noticeable through the whole length of their tentacles which boded no good to their smaller brethren. Doubtless but little longer was needed for the development of a great absorption of the weaker by the stronger, only that darting into their midst like a lightning streak came a messenger squid bearing the news that a school of sperm whales numbering at least a thousand were coming at top-speed direct for their place of meeting. Instantly to the farthest confines of that mighty gathering the message radiated, and as if by one movement there uprose from the sea-bed so dense a cloud of sepia that for many miles around the clear bright blue of the ocean became turbid, stagnant, and foul. Even the birds that hovered over those dark-brown waves took fright at this terrible phenomenon, to them utterly incomprehensible, and with discordant shrieks they fled in search of sweeter air and cleaner sea. But below the surface, under cover of this thickest darkness, there was the silence of death.

Twenty miles away, under the bright sunshine, an advance guard of about a hundred sperm whales came rushing on. Line abreast, their bushy breath rising like the regular steam-jets from a row of engines, they dashed aside the welcoming wavelets, every sense alert and full of eagerness for the consummation of their desires. Such had been their dispatch that throughout the long journey of 500 leagues they had not once stayed for food, so that they were ravenous with hunger as well as full of fight.

They passed, and before the foaming of their swift passage had ceased the main body, spread over a space of thirty miles, came following on, the roar of their multitudinous march sounding like the voice of many waters.

Suddenly the advance guard, with stately elevation of the broad fans of their flukes, disappeared, and by one impulse the main body followed them. Down into the depths they bore, noting with dignified wonder the absence of all the usual inhabitants of the deep until, with a thrill of joyful anticipation which set all their masses of muscle a-quiver, they recognised the scent of the prey. No thought of organized resistance presented itself; without a halt or even the faintest slackening of their great rush they plunged forward into the abysmal gloom; down, down withal into that wilderness of waiting demons. And so, in darkness and silence like that of the beginning of things, this great battle was joined. Whale after whale succumbed, anchored to the bottom by such bewildering entanglements, such enlacement of tentacles that their vast strength was helpless to free them, their jaws were bound hard together, and even the wide sweep of their flukes gat no hold upon the slimy water. But the decapods were in evil case. Assailed from above while their groping arms writhed about below they found themselves more often locked in unreleasable hold of their fellows than they did of their enemies. And the quick-shearing jaws of those foes shredded them into fragments, made nought of their bulk, revelled and frolicked among them, slaying, devouring, exulting. Again and again the triumphant mammals drew off for air and from satiety, went and lolled upon the sleek, oily surface in water now so thick that the fiercest hurricane that ever blew would have failed to raise a wave thereon.

So through a day and a night the slaying ceased not, except for these brief interludes, until those of the decapods left alive had disentangled themselves from the *débris* of their late associates and returned with what speed they might to depths and cranies where they fondly hoped their ravenous enemies could never come. Henceforth they were no longer lords of the sea; instead of being as hitherto devourers of all things living that crossed the radius of their outspread toils, they were now and for all time to be the prey of a nobler creation, a higher order of being, and at last they had taken their rightful position as creatures of usefulness in the vast economy of Creation.

At Sunwich Port.

By W. W. JACOBS.

CHAPTER XIV.



CAPTAIN NUGENT awoke the morning after his attempt to crimp his son with a bad headache. Not an ordinary headache, to disappear with a little cold water and fresh air ; but a splitting, racking affair, which made him feel all head and dulness. Weights pressed upon his eyelids and the back of his head seemed glued to his pillow.

He groaned faintly and, raising himself upon his elbow, opened his eyes and sat up with a sharp exclamation. His bed was higher from the floor than usual and, moreover, the floor was different. In the dim light he distinctly saw a ship's fore-castle, untidy bunks with frouzy bedclothes, and shiny oilskins hanging from the bulkhead.

For a few moments he stared about in mystification ; he was certainly ill, and no doubt the fore-castle was an hallucination. It was a strange symptom, and the odd part of it was that everything was so distinct. Even the smell. He stared harder, in the hope that his surroundings would give place to the usual ones, and, leaning a little bit more on his elbow, nearly rolled out of the bunk. Resolved to probe this mystery to the bottom he lowered himself to the floor and felt distinctly the motion of a ship at sea.

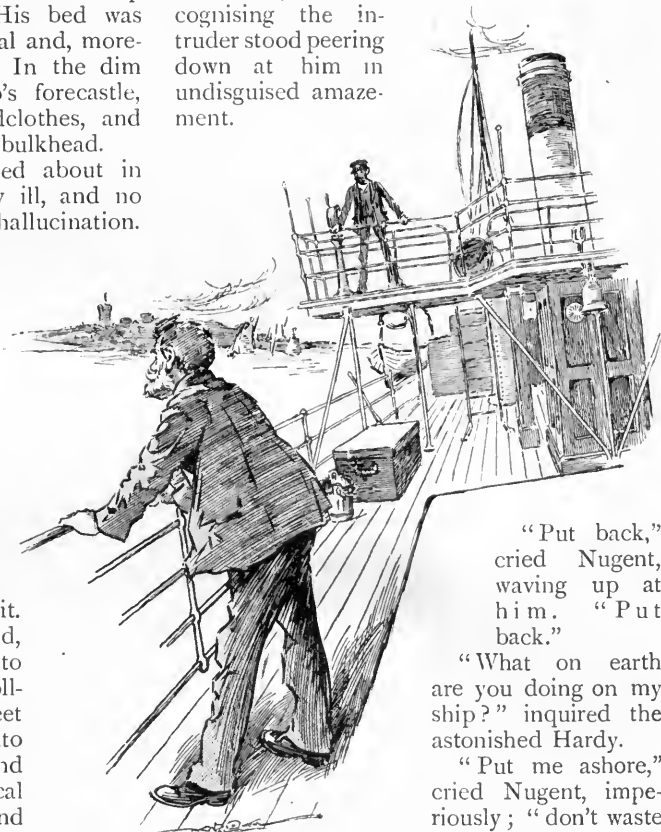
There was no doubt about it. He staggered to the door and, holding by the side, looked on to the deck. The steamer was rolling in a fresh sea and a sweet strong wind blew refreshingly into his face. Funnels, bridge, and masts swung with a rhythmical motion ; loose gear rattled, and every now and then a distant tinkle sounded faintly from the steward's pantry.

He stood bewildered, trying to piece together the events of the preceding night, and to try and understand by what miracle he was back on board his old ship the *Conqueror*. There was no doubt as to her identity. He knew every inch of her, and any further confirmation that might be required was fully supplied by the appear-

ance of the long, lean figure of Captain Hardy on the bridge.

Captain Nugent took his breath sharply and began to realize the situation. He stepped to the side and looked over ; the harbour was only a little way astern, and Sunwich itself, looking cold and cheerless beyond the dirty, tumbling seas, little more than a mile distant.

At the sight his spirits revived, and with a hoarse cry he ran shouting towards the bridge. Captain Hardy turned sharply at the noise, and recognising the intruder stood peering down at him in undisguised amazement.



"HE STEPPED TO THE SIDE AND LOOKED OVER."

"Put back," cried Nugent, waving up at him. "Put back."

"What on earth are you doing on my ship?" inquired the astonished Hardy.

"Put me ashore," cried Nugent, imperiously ; "don't waste time talking. D'ye hear? Put me ashore."

The amazement died out of Hardy's face and gave way to an expression of anger. For a time he regarded the red and threatening visage of Captain Nugent in silence, then he turned to the second officer.

"This man is not one of the crew, Mr. Prowle?" he said, in a puzzled voice.

"No, sir," said Mr. Prowle.

"How did he get aboard here?"

Captain Nugent answered the question himself. "I was crimped by you and your drunken bullies," he said, sternly.

"How did this man get aboard here?" repeated Captain Hardy, ignoring him.

"He must have concealed himself somewhere, sir," said the mate; "this is the first I've seen of him."

"A stowaway?" said the captain, bending his brows. "He must have got some of the crew to hide him aboard. You'd better make a clean breast of it, my lad. Who are your confederates?"

Captain Nugent shook with fury. The second mate had turned away, with his hand over his mouth and a suspicious hunching of his shoulders, while the steward, who had been standing by, beat a hasty retreat and collapsed behind the chart-room.

"If you don't put me ashore," said Nugent, restraining his passion by a strong effort, "I'll take proceedings against you for crimping me, the moment I reach port. Get a boat out and put me aboard that smack."

He pointed as he spoke to a smack which was just on their beam, making slowly for the harbour.

"When you've done issuing orders," said the captain, in an indifferent voice, "perhaps you'll explain what you are doing aboard my craft."

Captain Nugent gazed at the stern of the fast-receding smack; Sunwich was getting dim in the distance and there was no other sail near. He began to realize that he was in for a long voyage.

"I awoke this morning and found myself in a bunk in your fo'c's'le," he said, regarding Hardy steadily. "How I got there is probably best known to yourself. I hold you responsible for the affair."

"Look here, my lad," said Captain Hardy, in patronizing tones, "I don't know how you got aboard my ship and I don't care. I am willing to believe that it was not intentional on your part, but either the outcome of a drunken freak or else a means of escaping from some scrape you have got into ashore. That being so, I shall take a merciful view of it, and if you behave yourself and make yourself useful you will not hear anything more of it. He has something the look of a seafaring man, Mr. Prowle. See what you can make of him."

"Come along with me, my lad," said the grinning Mr. Prowle, tapping him on the shoulder.

The captain turned with a snarl, and,

clenching his huge, horny fist, let drive full in the other's face and knocked him off his feet.

"Take that man for'ard," cried Captain Hardy, sharply. "Take him for'ard."

Half-a-dozen willing men sprang forward. Captain Nugent's views concerning sailormen were well known in Sunwich, and two of the men present had served under him. He went forward, the centre of an attentive and rotating circle, and, sadly out of breath, was bestowed in the forecabin and urged to listen to reason.

For the remainder of the morning he made no sign. The land was almost out of sight, and he sat down quietly to consider his course of action for the next few weeks. Dinner-time found him still engrossed in thought, and the way in which he received an intimation from a good-natured seaman that his dinner was getting cold showed that his spirits were still unquelled.

By the time afternoon came he was faint with hunger, and, having determined upon his course of action, he sent a fairly polite message to Captain Hardy and asked for an interview.

The captain, who was resting from his labours in the chart-room, received him with the same air of cold severity which had so endeared Captain Nugent himself to his subordinates.

"You have come to explain your extraordinary behaviour of this morning, I suppose?" he said, curtly.

"I have come to secure a berth aft," said Captain Nugent. "I will pay a small deposit now, and you will, of course, have the balance as soon as we get back. This is without prejudice to any action I may bring against you later on."

"Oh, indeed," said the other, raising his eyebrows. "We don't take passengers."

"I am here against my will," said Captain Nugent, "and I demand the treatment due to my position."

"If I had treated you properly," said Captain Hardy, "I should have put you in irons for knocking down my second officer. I know nothing about you or your position. You're a stowaway, and you must do the best you can in the circumstances."

"Are you going to give me a cabin?" demanded the other, menacingly.

"Certainly not," said Captain Hardy. "I have been making inquiries, and I find that you have only yourself to thank for the position in which you find yourself. I am sorry to be harsh with you."

"Harsh?" repeated the other, hardly able to believe his ears. "You—harsh to me?"

"But it is for your own good," pursued Captain Hardy; "it is no pleasure to me to punish you. I shall keep an eye on you while you're aboard, and if I see that your conduct is improving you will find that I am not a hard man to get on with."

Captain Nugent stared at him with his lips parted. Three times he essayed to speak and failed; then he turned sharply and, gaining the open air, stood for some time trying to regain his composure before going forward again. The first mate, who was on the bridge, regarded him curiously, and then, with an insufferable air of authority, ordered him away.

The captain obeyed mechanically and, turning a deaf ear to the inquiries of the men, prepared to make the best of an intolerable situation, and began to cleanse his bunk. First of all he took out the bedding and shook it thoroughly, and then, procuring soap and a bucket of water, began to scrub with a will. Hostile comments followed the action.

"We ain't clean enough for 'im," said one voice.

"Partikler old party, ain't he, Bill?" said another.

"You leave 'im alone," said the man addressed, surveying the captain's efforts with a smile of approval.

"You keep on, Nugent, don't you mind 'im. There's a little bit there you ain't done."

"Keep your head out of the way, unless you want it knocked off," said the incensed captain.

"Ho!" said the aggrieved Bill. "Ho, indeed! D'ye 'ear that, mates? A man mustn't look at 'is own bunk now."

The captain turned as though he had been stung. "This is my bunk," he said, sharply.

"Ho, is it?" said Bill. "Beggin' of your pardon, an' apologizing for a-

contradictin' of you, but it's mine. You haven't got no bunk."

"I slept in it last night," said the captain, conclusively.

"I know you did," said Bill, "but that was all my kind-'artedness."

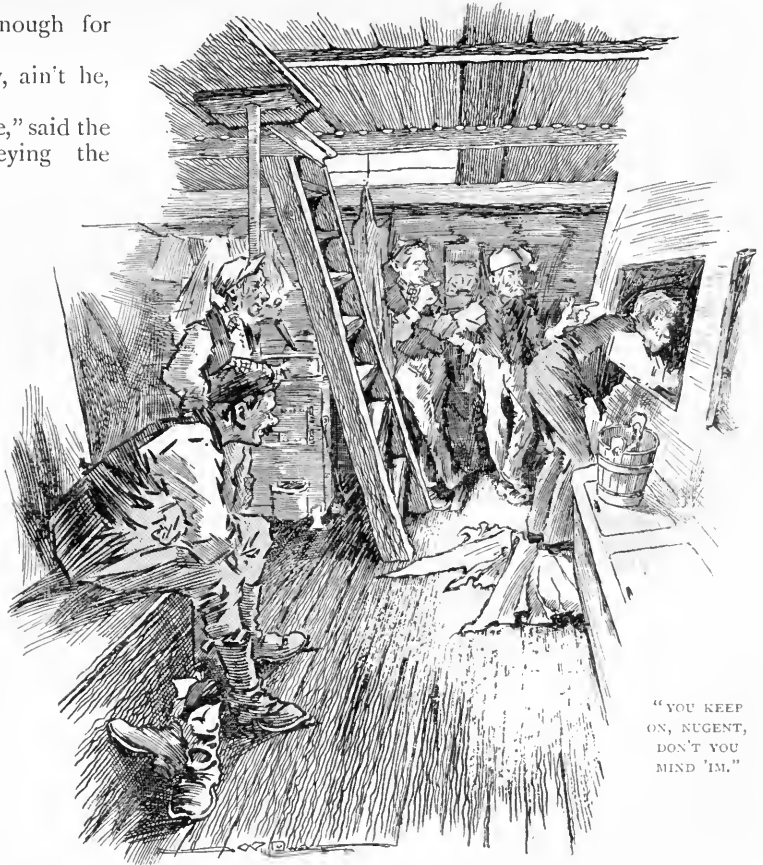
"And 'arf a quid, Bill," a voice reminded him.

"And 'arf a quid," assented Bill, graciously, "and I'm very much obliged to you, mate, for the careful and tidy way in which you've cleaned up arter yourself."

The captain eyed him. Many years of command at sea had given him a fine manner, and force of habit was for a moment almost too much for Bill and his friends. But only for a moment.

"I'm going to keep this bunk," said the captain, deliberately.

"No, you ain't, mate," said Bill, shaking his head, "don't you believe it. You're nobody down here; not even a ordinary seaman. I'm afraid you'll 'ave to clean a place for yourself on the carpet. There's a nice corner over there."



"YOU KEEP
ON, NUGENT,
DON'T YOU
MIND 'IM."

"When I get back," said the furious captain, "some of you will go to gaol for last night's work."

"Don't be hard on us," said a mocking voice, "we did our best. It ain't our fault that you look so ridiklerously young, that we took you for your own son."

"And you was in that state that you couldn't contradict us," said another man.

"If it is your bunk," said the captain, sternly, "I suppose you have a right to it. But perhaps you'll sell it to me? How much?"

"Now you're talking bisness," said the highly gratified Bill, turning with a threatening gesture upon a speculator opposite. "Wot do you say to a couple o' pounds?"

The captain nodded.

"Couple o' pounds, money down," said Bill, holding out his hand.

The captain examined the contents of his pocket, and after considerable friction bought the bunk for a pound cash and an I O U for the balance.

A more humane man would have shown a little concern as to his benefactor's sleeping-place; but the captain never gave the matter a thought. In fact, it was not until three days later that he discovered there was a spare bunk in the fore-castle, and that the unscrupulous seaman was occupying it.

It was only one of many annoyances, but the captain realizing his impotence made no sign. From certain remarks let fall in his hearing he had no difficulty in connecting Mr. Kybird with his discomfiture and, of his own desire, he freely included the unfortunate Mr. Wilks.

He passed his time in devising schemes of vengeance, and when Captain Hardy, relenting, offered him a cabin aft, he sent back such a message of refusal that the

steward spent half an hour preparing a paraphrase. The offer was not repeated, and the captain, despite the strong representations of Bill and his friends, continued to eat the bread of idleness before the mast.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. ADOLPHUS SWANN spent a very agreeable afternoon after his interview with Nathan Smith in refusing to satisfy what he termed the idle curiosity of his partner. The secret of Captain Nugent's whereabouts, he declared, was not to be told to everybody, but was to be confided by a man of insinuating address and appearance—here he looked at himself in a hand-glass—to Miss Nugent. To be broken to her by a man with no ulterior motives for his visit; a man in the prime of life, but not too old for a little tender sympathy.

"I had hoped to have gone this afternoon," he said, with a glance at the clock; "but I'm afraid I can't get away. Have you got much to do, Hardy?"

"No," said his partner, briskly. "I've finished."

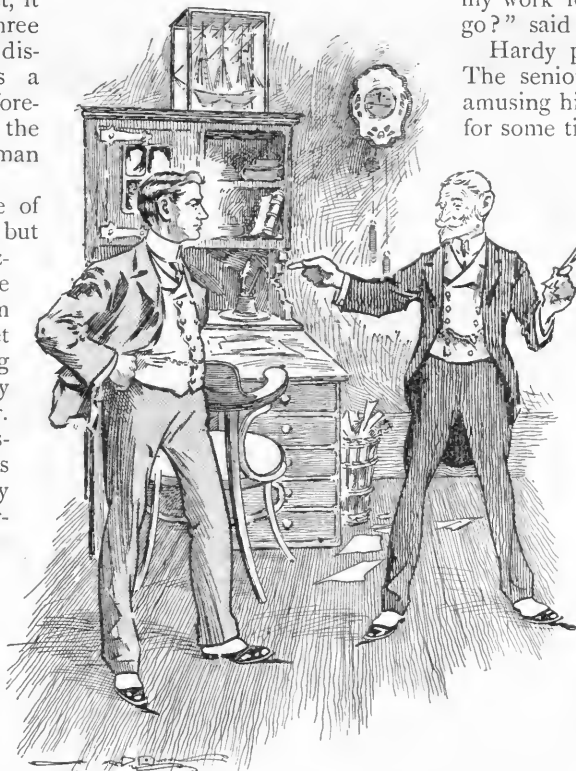
"Then perhaps you wouldn't mind doing my work for me, so that I can go?" said Mr. Swann, mildly.

Hardy played with his pen. The senior partner had been amusing himself at his expense for some time, and in the hope of a favour at his hands he had endured it with unusual patience.

"Four o'clock," murmured the senior partner; "hadn't you better see about making yourself presentable, Hardy?"

"Thanks," said the other, with alacrity, as he took off his coat and crossed over to the little washstand. In five minutes he had finished his toilet and, giving his partner a little friendly pat on the shoulder, locked up his desk.

"Well?" he said, at last.



"HADN'T YOU BETTER SEE ABOUT MAKING YOURSELF PRESENTABLE, HARDY?"

"Well?" repeated Mr. Swann, with a little surprise.

"What am I to tell them?" inquired Hardy, struggling to keep his temper.

"Tell them?" repeated the innocent Swann. "Lor' bless my soul, how you do jump at conclusions, Hardy. I only asked you to tidy yourself for my sake. I have an artistic eye. I thought you had done it to please me."

"When you're tired of this nonsense," said the indignant Hardy, "I shall be glad."

Mr. Swann looked him over carefully and, coming to the conclusion that his patience was exhausted, told him the result of his inquiries. His immediate reward was the utter incredulity of Mr. Hardy, together with some pungent criticisms of his veracity. When the young man did realize at last that he was speaking the truth he fell to wondering blankly what was happening aboard the *Conqueror*.

"Never mind about that," said the older man. "For a few weeks you have got a clear field. It is quite a bond between you: both your fathers on the same ship. But whatever you do, don't remind her of the fate of the Kilkenny cats. Draw a fancy picture of the two fathers sitting with their arms about each other's waists and wondering whether their children——"

Hardy left hurriedly, in fear that his indignation at such frivolity should overcome his gratitude, and he regretted as he walked briskly along that the diffidence peculiar to young men in his circumstances had prevented him from acquainting his father with the state of his feelings towards Kate Nugent.

The idea of taking advantage of the captain's enforced absence had occurred to other people besides Mr. James Hardy. Dr. Murchison, who had found the captain, despite his bias in his favour, a particularly tiresome third, was taking the fullest advantage of it; and Mrs. Kybird had also judged it an admirable opportunity for paying a first call. Mr. Kybird, who had not taken her into his confidence in the affair, protested in vain; the lady was determined, and, moreover, had the warm support of her daughter.

"I know what I'm doing, Dan'l," she said to her husband.

Mr. Kybird doubted it, but held his peace; and the objections of Jack Nugent, who found to his dismay that he was to be of the party, were deemed too trivial to be worthy of serious consideration.

They started shortly after Jem Hardy had left his office, despite the fact that Mrs. Kybird, who was troubled with asthma, was suffering untold agonies in a black satin dress which had been originally made for a much smaller woman, and had come into her husband's hands in the way of business. It got into hers in what the defrauded Mr. Kybird considered an extremely unbusinesslike manner, and it was not without a certain amount of satisfaction that he regarded her discomfiture as the party sallied out.

Mr. Nugent was not happy. Mrs. Kybird in the snug seclusion of the back parlour was one thing; Mrs. Kybird in black satin at its utmost tension and a circular hat set with sable ostrich plumes nodding in the breeze was another. He felt that the public



"IT WAS NOT WITHOUT A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF SATISFACTION THAT HE REGARDED HER DISCOMFITURE."

eye was upon them and that it twinkled. His gaze wandered from mother to daughter.

"What are you staring at?" demanded Miss Kybird, pertly.

"I was thinking how well you are looking," was the reply.

Miss Kybird smiled. She had hoisted some daring colours, but she was of a bold type and carried them fairly well.

"If I 'ad the woman what made this dress 'ere," gasped Mrs. Kybird, as she stopped with her hand on her side, "I'd give her a bit o' my mind."

"I never saw you look so well in anything before, ma," said her daughter.

Mrs. Kybird smiled faintly and continued her pilgrimage. Jem Hardy coming up rapidly behind composed his amused features and stepped into the road to pass.

"Halloa, Hardy," said Nugent. "Going home?"

"I am calling on your sister," said Hardy, bowing.

"By Jove, so are we," said Nugent, relieved to find this friend in need. "We'll go together. You know Mrs. Kybird and Miss Kybird? That is Mrs. Kybird."

Mrs. Kybird bade him "Go along, do," and acknowledged the introduction with as stately a bow as the black satin would permit, and before the dazed Jem quite knew how it all happened he was leading the way with Mrs. Kybird, while the young people, as she called them, followed behind.

"We ain't looking at you," she said, playfully, over her shoulder.

"And we're trying to shut our eyes to your goings on," retorted Nugent.

Mrs. Kybird stopped and, with a half-turn, playfully reached for him with her umbrella. The exertion and the joke combined took the remnant of her breath away, and she stood still, panting.

"You had better take Hardy's arm, I think," said Nugent, with affected solicitude.

"It's my breath," explained Mrs. Kybird, turning to the fuming young man by her side. "I can 'ardly get along for it—I'm much obliged to you, I'm sure."

Mr. Hardy, with a vain attempt to catch

Jack Nugent's eye, resigned himself to his fate, and with his fair burden on his arm walked with painful slowness towards Equator Lodge. A ribald voice from the other side of the road, addressing his companion as "Mother Kybird," told her not to hug the man, and a small boy whom they met loudly asseverated his firm intention of going straight off to tell Mr. Kybird.

By the time they reached the house Mr. Hardy entertained views on homicide which would have appeared impossible to him half an hour before. He flushed crimson as he saw the astonished face of Kate Nugent at the window, and, pausing at the gate to wait for the others, discovered that they had disappeared. A rooted dislike to scenes of any kind, together with a keen eye for the ludicrous, had prompted Jack Nugent to

suggest a pleasant stroll to Amelia and



"MR. HARDY RESIGNED HIMSELF TO HIS FATE."

put in an appearance later on.

"We won't wait for 'im," said Mrs. Kybird, with decision; "if I don't get a sit down soon I shall drop."

Still clinging to the reluctant Hardy she walked up the path; farther back in the darkness of the room the unfortunate young gentleman saw the faces of Dr. Murchison and Mrs. Kingdom.

"And 'ow are you, Bella?" inquired Mrs. Kybird with kindly condescension. "Is Mrs. Kingdom at 'ome?"

She pushed her way past the astonished Bella and, followed by Mr. Hardy, entered the

room. Mrs. Kingdom, with a red spot on each cheek, rose to receive them.

"I ought to 'ave come before," said Mrs. Kybird, subsiding thankfully into a chair, "but I'm such a bad walker. I 'ope I see you well."

"We are very well, thank you," said Mrs. Kingdom, stiffly.

"That's right," said her visitor, cordially ; "what a blessing 'ealth is. What should we do without it, I wonder?"

She leaned back in her chair and shook her head at the prospect. There was an awkward lull, and in the offended gaze of Miss Nugent Mr. Hardy saw only too plainly that he was held responsible for the appearance of the unwelcome visitor.

"I was coming to see you," he said, leaving his chair and taking one near her. "I met your brother coming along, and he introduced me to Mrs. Kybird and her daughter and suggested we should come together."

Miss Nugent received the information with a civil bow, and renewed her conversation with Dr. Murchison, whose face showed such a keen appreciation of the situation that Hardy had some difficulty in masking his feelings.

"They're a long time a-coming," said Mrs. Kybird, smiling archly ; "but there, when young people are keeping company they forget everything and everybody. They didn't trouble about me ; if it 'adn't been for Mr. 'Ardy giving me 'is arm I should never 'ave got here."

There was a prolonged silence. Dr. Murchison gave a whimsical glance at Miss Nugent, and meeting no response in that lady's indignant eyes, stroked his moustache and waited events.

"It looks as though your brother is not coming," said Hardy to Miss Nugent.

"He'll turn up by-and-by," interposed Mrs. Kybird, looking somewhat morosely at the company. "They don't notice 'ow the time flies, that's all."

"Time does go," murmured Mrs. Kingdom, with a glance at the clock.

Mrs. Kybird started. "Ah, and we notice it too, ma'am, at our age," she said, sweetly, as she settled herself in her chair and clasped her hands in her lap. "I can't 'elp looking at you, my dear," she continued, looking over at Miss Nugent. "There's such a wonderful likeness between Jack and you. Don't you think so, ma'am?"

Mrs. Kingdom in a freezing voice said that she had not noticed it.

"Of course," said Mrs. Kybird, glancing

at her from the corner of her eye, "Jack has 'ad to rough it, pore feller, and that's left its mark on 'im. I'm sure, when we took 'im in, he was quite done up, so to speak. He'd only got what 'e stood up in, and the only pair of socks he'd got to his feet was in such a state of 'oles that they had to be thrown away. I threw 'em away myself."

"Dear me," said Mrs. Kingdom.

"He don't look like the same feller now," continued the amiable Mrs. Kybird ; "good living and good clothes 'ave worked wonders in 'im. I'm sure if he'd been my own son I couldn't 'ave done more for 'im, and, as for Kybird, he's like a father to him."

"Dear me," said Mrs. Kingdom, again.

Mrs. Kybird looked at her. It was on the tip of her tongue to call her a poll parrot. She was a free-spoken woman as a rule, and it was terrible to have to sit still and waste all the good things she could have said to her in favour of unsatisfying pin-pricks. She sat smouldering.

"I s'pose you miss the capt'in very much?" she said, at last.

"Very much," was the reply.

"And I should think 'e misses you," retorted Mrs. Kybird, unable to restrain herself ; "'e must miss your conversation and, what I might call, your liveliness."

Mrs. Kingdom turned and regarded her, and the red stole back to her cheeks again. She smoothed down her dress and her hands trembled. Both ladies were now regarding each other in a fashion which caused serious apprehension to the rest of the company.

"I am not a great talker, but I am very careful whom I converse with," said Mrs. Kingdom, in her most stately manner.

"I knew a lady like that once," said Mrs. Kybird ; "leastways, she wasn't a lady," she added, meditatively.

Mrs. Kingdom fidgeted, and looked over piteously at her niece ; Mrs. Kybird, with a satisfied sniff, sat bolt upright and meditated further assaults. There were at least a score of things she could have said about her adversary's cap alone : plain, straightforward remarks which would have torn it to shreds. The cap fascinated her, and her fingers itched as she gazed at it. In more congenial surroundings she might have snatched at it, but, being a woman of strong character, she suppressed her natural instincts, and confined herself to more polite methods of attack.

"Your nephew don't seem to be in no hurry," she remarked, at length ; "but, there,

directly 'e gets along o' my daughter 'e forgits everything and everybody."

"I really don't think he is coming," said Hardy, moved to speech by the glances of Miss Nugent.

"I shall give him a little longer," said Mrs. Kybird. "I only came 'ere to please 'im, and to get 'ome alone is more than I can do."

Miss Nugent looked at Mr. Hardy, and her eyes were soft and expressive. As plainly as eyes could speak they asked him to take Mrs. Kybird home, lest worse things should happen.

"Would it be far out of your way?" she asked, in a low voice.

"Quite the opposite direction," returned Mr. Hardy, firmly.

"How I got 'ere I don't know," said Mrs. Kybird, addressing the room in general; "it's a wonder to me. Well, once is enough in a lifetime."

"Mr. Hardy," said Kate Nugent, again, in a low voice, "I should be so much obliged if you would take Mrs. Kybird away. She seems bent on quarrelling with my aunt. It is very awkward."

It was difficult to resist the entreaty, but Mr. Hardy had a very fair idea of the duration of Miss Nugent's gratitude; and, besides that, Murchison was only too plainly enjoying his discomfiture.

"She can get home alone all right," he whispered.

Miss Nugent drew herself up disdainfully; Dr. Murchison, looking scandalized at his brusqueness, hastened to the rescue.

"As a medical man," he said, with a considerable appearance of gravity, "I don't think that Mrs. Kybird ought to go home alone."

"Think not?" inquired Hardy, grimly.

"Certain of it," breathed the doctor.

"Well, why don't you take her?" retorted

Hardy; "it's all on your way. I have some news for Miss Nugent."

Miss Nugent looked from one to the other, and mischievous lights appeared in her eyes as she gazed at the carefully-groomed and fastidious Murchison. From them she looked to the other side of the room, where Mrs. Kybird was stolidly eyeing Mrs. Kingdom, who was trying in vain to appear ignorant of the fact.

"Thank you very much," said Miss Nugent, turning to the doctor.

"I'm sorry," began Murchison, with an indignant glance at his rival.

"Oh, as you please," said the girl, coldly.

"Pray forgive me for asking you."

"If you really wish it," said the doctor, rising.

Miss Nugent smiled upon him, and Hardy

also gave him a smile of kindly encouragement, but this he ignored. He crossed the room and bade Mrs. Kingdom good-bye; and then in a few disjointed words asked Mrs. Kybird whether he could be of any assistance in seeing her home.

"I'm sure I'm much obliged to you," said that lady, as she rose. "It don't seem much use for me waiting for my future son-in-law. I wish you good afternoon, ma'am. I can understand now why Jack didn't come."

With this parting shot she quitted the room and, leaning on the doctor's arm, sailed majestically down the path to the gate, every feather on her hat trembling in response to the excitement below.

"Good-natured of him," said Hardy, glancing from the window,

with a triumphant smile.

"Very," said Miss Nugent, coldly, as she took a seat by her aunt. "What is the news to which you referred just now? Is it about my father?"



"THE CAREFULLY-GROOMED AND FASTIDIOUS DR. MURCHISON."

(To be continued.)

A Hundred Years Ago—1801.

BY ALFRED WHITMAN. WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM OLD PRINTS.



SO very much has to be related of the first year of the nineteenth century that to economize space all introduction will be dispensed with. On January 1st a new era dawned—an era of Union; and in the chief towns of the three kingdoms bells were rung, guns were fired, and there was hoisted the new flag—the Union Jack. In honour of the new alliance there were Union flowers, Union feathers, Union handkerchiefs, Union fans, and Union engravings. We reproduce one of these last, and at the base of it we read:—

While discord o'er distracted Europe reigns
Union and Concord grace Britannia's plains.
See where, with Scotia, her transported smile
And arms expanded greet her Sister Isle.

A number of striking coincidences can be named between the years 1801 and 1901; but for brevity's sake we will only mention the events of the former year, leaving the reader to recall the modern parallels. Changes were required in the Book of Common Prayer; the King's title was altered to suit the change in the Constitution; a new Great Seal was required; the Coronation oath formed a subject of public and Parliamentary discussion; a war-tax of 1s. 10d.

per cwt. was imposed on sugar; the King opened the first Parliament of the century in State; the prisoners of war held by this country numbered 24,000. April 14: "The clothing of the British Army is going to be conducted on an entire new plan." Sept. 14:

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"Eight Boors have been executed at the Cape of Good Hope for having excited the farmers and others at Graffe Reinet to revolt."

This by way of contrast. June 20: "The British Cavalry in Egypt is mounted at the expense of sixteen shillings a horse. This is the cheapest contract Government ever made."

The principal subject of foreign politics to engage the attention of the Government was the difficult Egyptian Question. France was occupying Egypt, and for the safety of our Indian possessions it was deemed imperative to expel her. The effective English force for the field, in the Mediterranean, was about 12,000 men, with Sir Ralph Abercromby as General-in-Chief. With this number, to attack an army of 32,000 men with cavalry, and at least 1,000 pieces of artillery, and that

was in possession of a country with fortifications, was a project certainly audacious, if not foolhardy.

By March 2nd the British Fleet anchored in Aboukir Bay at the exact spot where the Battle of the Nile had been fought in 1798. On the morning of the 8th the first division of the army, 5,500 strong, assembled in the boats, the remainder, on the ships, acting as supports. At nine o'clock the signal was

made for the boats to advance, and simultaneously they dashed forward to effect a landing, as is admirably shown in our illustration. The French, from the sandhills, discharged the full force of their artillery, so that it seemed as though nothing in the



EMBLEM OF THE UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
JANUARY 1, 1801.



THE LANDING OF THE BRITISH TROOPS IN EGYPT, MARCH 8, 1801.

water could live; but the British troops succeeded in reaching the beach, formed up and, without firing a shot, forced their way to the sandhills and gained possession of them. By the evening the whole of the British army was on shore.

A fortnight later was fought the memorable Battle of Alexandria, of which we give an illustration. Ménou, the French commander, had advanced from Cairo to surprise the British, but his scheme did not succeed. The struggle lasted nearly seven hours, and after both sides had exhausted their ammuni-

tion the combat was carried on with stones; but at length Ménou was compelled to retire with a loss of 4,000 men against our 1,500.

But our losses included that of the English commander, Sir Ralph Abercromby. It is supposed that the wound—a bullet wound in the thigh—was received during a charge, as he was known to be anxious to be well forward in the battle. For two hours he kept at his post directing the movements of the troops, and it was not until the battle was won, and the enemy repulsed, that he yielded to Nature and fainted. This is the moment



THE BATTLE OF ALEXANDRIA, MARCH 21, 1801.

selected by Stothard in the illustration we give. Abercromby was carried back to the ship, but, all surgical efforts unavailing, he died seven days after the battle, on March 28th, and was taken to Malta to be buried.

Rosetta and Cairo next fell into the possession of the British, with the aid of Turkish reinforcements, and by August 3rd Alexandria also surrendered. Then, by agreement, the entire French army was conveyed home to France by the allied Powers of England and Turkey.

Coming back to England, we note that on March 10th the first decennial census of the

years, and the succession of Addington to the head of affairs with a new Cabinet. This event took place in March, and was the cause of much discussion, and many caricatures were published in reference to Pitt's Administration. One graceful act of Parliament demands special mention. The news of the victory at Copenhagen, of which we shall speak presently, reached this country on April 15th. The next day, in both Houses, votes of thanks were carried unanimously to the admirals, the officers, and to "the seamen, marines, and soldiers of the fleet." In September "a very extraordinary robbery took



GENERAL SIR RALPH ABERCROMBY MORTALLY WOUNDED, MARCH 21, 1801.

population of the United Kingdom was taken. The result obtained was not very accurate, "as from some parishes no returns were made," but the numbers officially published were : for the United Kingdom, 10,942,646 ; for England and Wales, 8,872,980 ; and for London, 900,000.

Although the amount of business to be transacted by Parliament was much less in 1801 than now, still the Houses were sitting much longer in 1801 than in 1901. Parliament was in Session from January 22nd till December 28th, with the exception of a recess from July 2nd till October 29th, and the usual brief holidays at Easter, etc. The most important event in the House of Commons was the resignation of Pitt, who had been Prime Minister nearly eighteen

place in the House of Lords. The whole of the gold lace and all the ornaments of the Throne, the King's Arms excepted, were stripped off and carried away." We may add that the thief was never found.

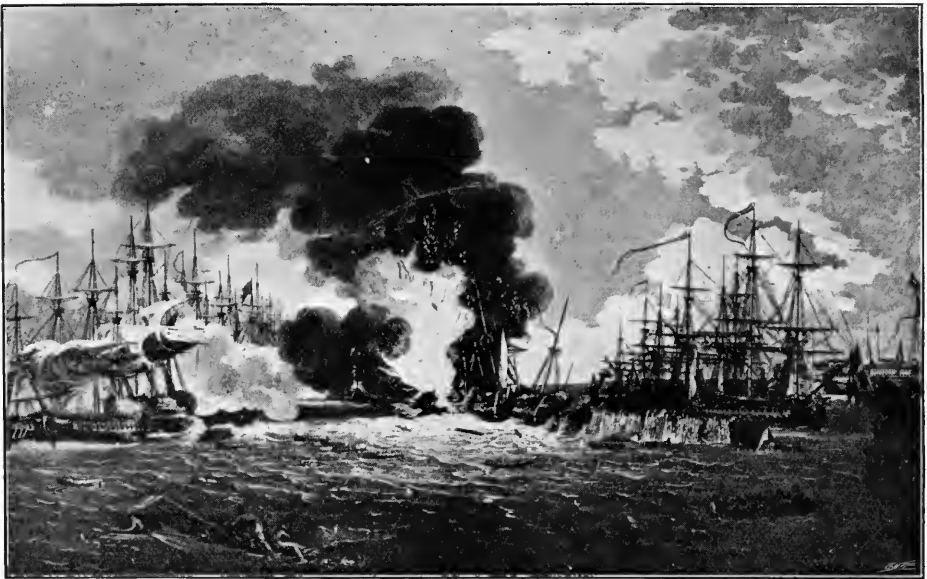
The Royal Family (that is to say, the King, Queen, and the Princesses) spent the year in their usual quiet way, with "occasional airings" round Highgate and Hampstead, or "over Westminster Bridge and returning home through Battersea," and suffered the usual mild ailments, though the cold the King contracted early in the year was exceedingly severe and delayed the affairs of Parliament and postponed the change of Ministry. Even the summer holiday was spent as usual at Weymouth, though, by way of change, on the outward

journey the Royal party went by a newly-launched yacht from Christchurch to Weymouth, and on the way back, early in October, broke the journey at Andover and stayed the night at the Star and Garter Inn, from whence the next morning "about ten the Royal party set off in high health and spirits for Windsor."

By far the most popular and most talked-of hero of the year was undoubtedly Lord Nelson, recently home for the first time since the Battle of the Nile. And as he took so large a share of the public interest we must devote a special paragraph to his doings. On January 13th he left London for Plymouth to join the fleet on active service, and two days later he was greeted with a stirring reception at Exeter and presented with the freedom of the city. On the 16th he arrived at Plymouth and on the 31st he set sail. Trouble in the Baltic brewing fast, he was back in London by February 24th, and early in March was at Yarmouth preparing for the expedition against Denmark. A few days

but by the end of the month he assumed command in the Channel, and on August 5th bombarded the French fleet at Boulogne. A second attack a fortnight later was unsuccessful and he returned to Deal, where he spent a holiday with Sir William and Lady Hamilton. In the *Deal News* of September 23rd we read: "On Wednesday his lordship discharged his bill at the inn for the last three weeks, which, exclusively of wine, amounted to the sum of £265." He settled the purchase of "Merton Place, Surry," before setting off to join his flotilla in the Channel, but with the peace he returned to the Downs and came back to London. On October 29th he took his seat as a viscount in the House of Lords, and on November 9th the horses were taken from his carriage and he was drawn by the populace to the Lord Mayor's banquet at the Guildhall.

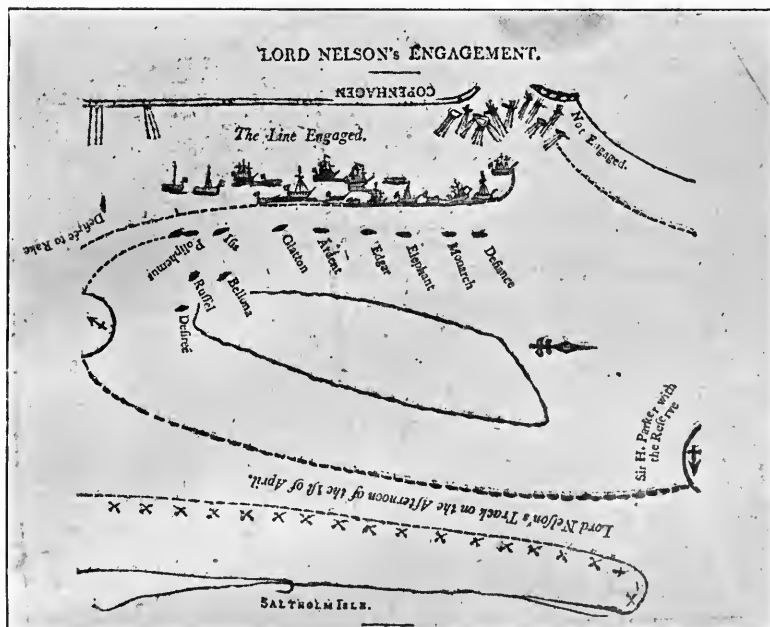
Now as to Copenhagen. It was felt that a conflict was inevitable between England and the Northern Confederacy of Sweden, Denmark, and Russia, on account



THE BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN, APRIL 2, 1801.

more and his fleet was under way, and on April 2nd he secured the victory at Copenhagen. Soon he took over supreme command of the Baltic fleet, but by June 29th he was back at Yarmouth visiting his wounded sailors in Yarmouth Hospital. The following day he set off for London, his postilions attired as sailors and the horses decked with ribbons. In July he was created a viscount, and went for a short rest up the river to Shepperton :

of the resistance offered to the English right to search vessels suspected of carrying cargoes favourable to the enemy. So the most active preparations were made in this country to measure strength with Denmark before the thawing of the ice could enable the other two Powers to sail south and render naval aid. Quite early in the year "the workmen in the dockyards were working by *candle-light* morning and evening to get the ships ready



THE EARLIEST EXAMPLE OF ILLUSTRATED DAILY JOURNALISM. FROM THE "TIMES," APRIL 20, 1801.

for sea." On March 12th the English squadron sailed from Yarmouth, and on April 2nd took place the great battle, with Sir Hyde Parker nominally in command, but with Lord Nelson as actual commander. The battle was fiercely waged, the English having to contend against almost overwhelming land as well as sea forces, and the difficulties of the navigation of the treacherous shallows in the vicinity of Copenhagen adding greatly to the dangers of the task. Nelson's refusal to see his superior officer's signal to withdraw, at the critical moment, and his nailing his own colours to the mast, are too well known to need repetition; and we will simply add that when the news of the great victory reached the Admiralty at two o'clock on the afternoon of April 15th Earl St. Vincent immediately sent a letter to the Lord Mayor of London in which he announced that "of twenty-three ships and vessels . . . eighteen were taken or destroyed, including in that

number seven ships of the line." Our illustration depicts the battle when at its height.

The lack and delay of news from the theatres of war were the cause of much uneasiness; and the country was frequently thrown into sudden alarms. The King, at Weymouth, was guarded by war-ships; "a very strict watch is kept up at Brighton (August 14th) and its vicinity during the Prince of Wales's residence, to prevent any surprise on the part of the enemy; and

horse patrols are stationed along the coast as soon as it is dusk." Many similar precautions were taken, and could be mentioned.

On the subject of the Press we have an important fact to announce. The year saw the first example of illustrated daily journalism, in a plan showing Nelson's operations before Copenhagen; and we have reproduced it on account of its special interest.

The foundation-stone of the London Stock Exchange in Capel Court was laid on May 18th by William Hammond, when the ceremony included a procession and a dinner, the occasion being described as a success,



THE OPENING OF THE PADDINGTON CANAL, JULY 10, 1801.

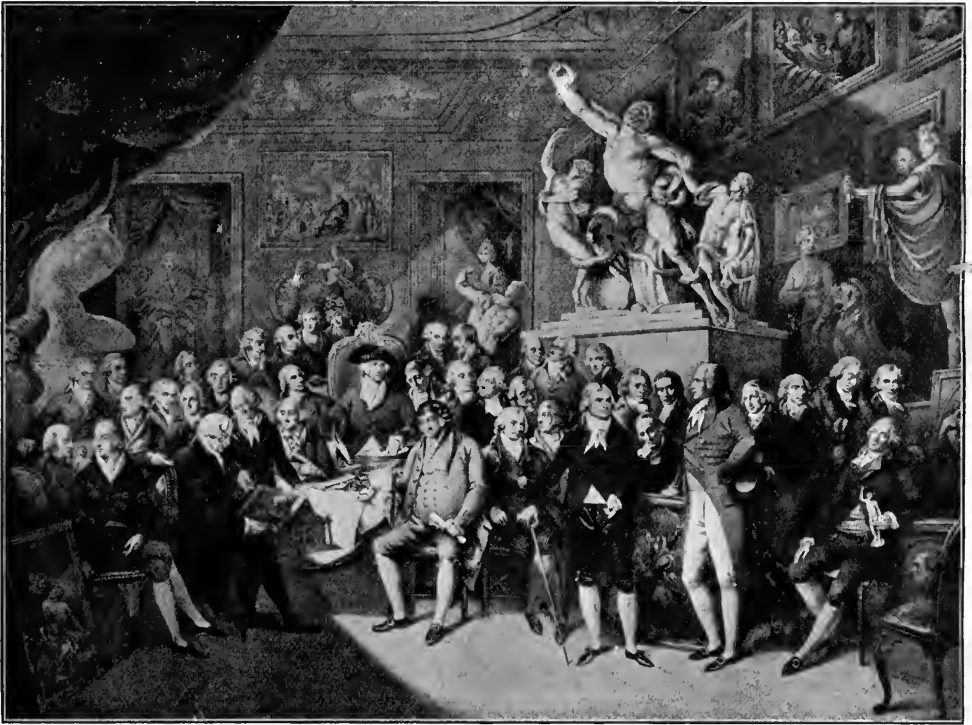
and the day being "spent in the utmost conviviality." A month later the Duke of York, accompanied by the Secretary of War and a number of officers, laid the first stone of the Duke of York's School at Chelsea; when "several coins and medals were deposited under a plate with an appropriate inscription."

The Paddington Canal was opened for traffic on July 10th, with a grand procession to Uxbridge and back, which took from 9 a.m. till 5.30 p.m., the return being announced by the firing of cannon from Westbourne Green Bridge. "After three huzzas the company landed and walked to the Yorkshire Stingo,

tively. Engravings after both of these famous artists have been employed in the present series of articles.

St. Swithin's Day, 1801, was a deception. On July 15th it rained in torrents, but within a day or two brilliant weather set in, with the result that in all parts of the country a most abundant harvest was secured. So impressed were the people that a special thanksgiving prayer was prepared and read in all the churches of the United Kingdom on Sunday, September 13th, "and at each service the next three Sundays."

But far more rejoicings took place during



THE ROYAL ACADEMICIANS OF THE YEAR 1801.

where, at half-past six, they sat down to dinner and spent the evening with conviviality." At least 20,000 persons assembled to witness the procession, which is well shown in our illustration.

The members of the Royal Academy at the opening of the century, with Benjamin West in the presidential chair, are admirably depicted in Singleton's painting, which we reproduce, but during the year that august body lost two of its prominent members—Thomas Wheatley, so well known by his "Cries of London," and William Hamilton, the painter of pretty fancy subjects, who died on June 28th and December 2nd respec-

tively. The first days of October, when, after many costly years of war, the preliminaries of peace were signed. We will not describe the long and tiresome negotiations which preceded the announcement, but on October 1st Lord Hawkesbury sent a letter to the Lord Mayor to notify that he had signed on behalf of England and Monsieur Otto for France.

It was on the 10th that news of the ratification arrived from France, but comparatively few illuminations were to be seen on that night (Saturday), and the crowds that assembled in the streets were driven home about eleven o'clock by a downpour of rain,

Sunday was spent quietly, but on Monday the illuminations were very numerous, the people marched along the streets singing patriotic airs, and revelry was general, so much so that some "fifteen persons had to appear at the Mansion House for throwing crackers and firing pistols in the streets." "To convey the joyful news to the country as quickly as possible, on the mail coaches was written in large capital letters the words : PEACE WITH FRANCE, and the coachmen wore laurel in their hats." Peace was the key-note of Lord Mayor's Day (which, by the way, was fine and drew an immense crowd), and Monsieur Otto was the guest of the evening.

Numerous pedestrian matches were contested during 1801. For example, in June a man ran twenty times round St. Paul's Churchyard in fifty-four minutes; and it was in this year that the famous Captain Barclay, who in 1809 was to perform the extraordinary feat of walking a mile an hour for a thousand successive hours, began his great career. In November Barclay walked ninety miles over a measured mile on the turnpike road in 21 hours 22min. 4sec. Instead of describing the race we will give an idea of his training for the task under Mr. Smith, a Yorkshire farmer: "Smith made him live upon raw meat and hard food, and do all sorts of hard work, sending him often to market with a heavy load of cheese and butter on his shoulders, and allowing him only an hour and a half to go ten miles with this weight." We give Captain Barclay's portrait.



CAPTAIN BARCLAY, THE FAMOUS PEDESTRIAN.

The year 1801 saw the first steamboat on the Thames, the first submarine dress at Folkestone, and a motor-car in France. "An experiment took place on July 1st on the River Thames, for the purpose of working a barge or any other heavy craft against tide by means of a steam-engine, on a very simple construction. The moment the engine was set to work the barge was brought about, answering her helm quickly, and she made way against a strong current

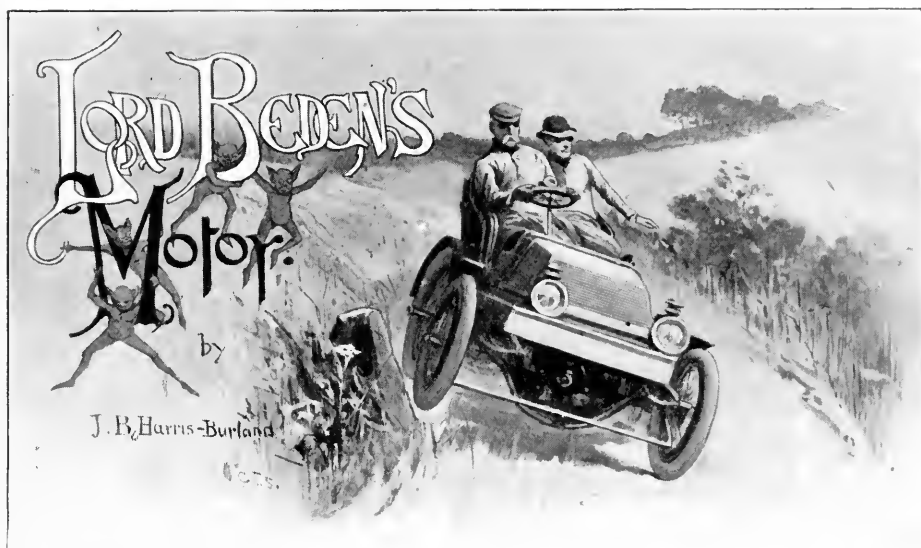
at the rate of two miles and a half per hour."

June 1: "Mr. Hodgman, engineer at Folkestone, on Thursday, made an experiment with his submarine apparatus. He walked into the sea attended by a small boat and, remaining eighteen minutes under water, he traversed in various directions more than a quarter of a mile, and ascended in about eighteen feet of water."

August 22nd: "A carriage, moved by mechanism within itself solely, was a few days since conducted, in three hours and a half, from Paimbœuf to Nantes, in France, which is a space of ten leagues."

On Boxing Night "The Tempest" was performed at Drury Lane Theatre and "Richard III." at Covent Garden. The Prince of Wales was in his box with a select party at the former theatre, but at the latter a disturbance took place as soon

as the curtain drew up, and a bottle thrown from the gallery struck the hat worn by Betterton and knocked out some of the jewels. "Amid a loud uproar the disturber was ejected."



A HARD man was Ralph Strang, seventh Earl of Beden, seventy years of age on his last birthday, but still upright as a dart, with hair white as snow, but with the devilry of youth still sparkling in his keen dark eyes. He was, indeed, able to follow the hounds with the best of us, and there were few men, even among the youngest and most hot-headed of our riders, who cared to follow him over all the jumps he put his horse at.

When I first came to Upstanway as a doctor I thought it strange that so good a sportsman should be so unpopular. As a rule a man can do pretty well anything in a sporting county so long as he rides straight to hounds. But before I had been in the place a month I attended him after a fall in the hunting-field, and I saw that a man like that would be unpopular even if he gave all his goods to the poor and lived the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Not that he was harsh or even unpleasant, but he had the knack of making one feel foolish and uncomfortable, and there was something in the expression of his eyes that made one unable to look him squarely in the face. His manners, indeed, were perfect, and he retained all the old-world courtliness which seems to have been permanently abandoned by this generation, but I could not help feeling that underneath all his politeness and even hospitality lay a solid substratum of contempt.

It was doubtless this impression which had earned him his unpopularity, for I never heard a single one of his enemies lay anything definite to his charge beyond the fact that his elder brother had died in a lunatic asylum, and that Lord Beden was in some vague way held responsible for this unfortunate event.

But it was not until Lord Beden purchased a 12-h.p. "Napier" motor-car that the villagers really began to consider him possessed of a devil. And certainly his spirit of devilry seemed to have found a worthy plaything in that grey mass of snorting machinery, which went through the lanes like a whirlwind, enveloped in a cloud of dust, and scattering every living thing close back against the hedges as a steamer dashes the waves against the banks of a river. I had often heard people whisper that he bore a charmed life in the hunting-field, and that another and better man would have been killed years ago; and he certainly carried the same spirit of dash and foolhardiness, and also the same good fortune, into a still more dangerous pursuit.

It was the purchase of this car that brought me into closer contact with him. I had had some experience of motors, and he was sufficiently humble to take some instructions from me, and also to let me accompany him on several occasions. At first I drove the car myself, and tried to inculcate a certain amount of caution by example, but after the

third lesson he knew as much about it as I did, and, resigning the steering-gear into his hands, I took my place by his side with some misgivings.

I must confess that he handled it splendidly. The man had a wonderful nerve, and when an inch to one side or the other would probably have meant death his keen eye never made a mistake and his hand on the wheel was as steady as a rock. This inspired confidence, and though the strain on my nerves was considerable, I found after a time a certain pleasurable excitement in these rides. And it was excitement, I can tell you. No twelve miles an hour for Lord Beden, no precautionary brakes down hill, no wide curves for corners. He rode, as he did to hounds, straight and fast. Sometimes we had six inches to spare, but never more, and as often as not another half inch would have shot us both out of the car. We always seemed to come round a sharp corner on two wheels. It was certainly exhilarating. But there was something about it I did not quite like. I don't think I was physically afraid, but I recalled certain stories about Lord Beden's mad exploits in the hunting-field, and it almost seemed to me as though he might be purposely riding for a fall.

Then all at once my invitations to ride with him ceased. I thought at first that I had offended him, but I could think of no possible cause of offence; and, besides, his manner towards me had not changed in any way, and I dined with him more than once at Beden Hall, where he was as courteous and irritating as usual. However, he offered no explanation, and I certainly did not intend to ask for one. I watched him narrowly when we talked about the motor, but he made no mystery about his rides. I noticed, however, that he looked older and more careworn, and that his dark eyes burned now with an almost unnatural brilliancy.

I met him two or three times on the road when I was going my rounds in the trap, and he appeared to be driving his machine more furiously and fearlessly than ever. I was almost glad that his invitations had ceased. Strangely enough, I always encountered him on the same road, one which led straight to Oxminster, a town about twenty miles away.

One evening, however, late in August, while I was finishing my dinner in solitude, I heard a familiar hum and rattle along the road in the distance. In less than a minute I saw the flash of bright lamps through my open window and heard the jar of a brake.

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Then there was a ring at the bell and Lord Beden was announced.

"Good evening, Scott," he said, taking off his glasses. "Lovely night, isn't it? Would you care to come for a ride?" He looked very pale, and was covered with dust from head to foot.

"A ride, Lord Beden?" I replied, thoughtfully. "Well, I hardly know what to say. Will you have some coffee and a cigar?"

He nodded assent and sat down. I poured him out some coffee, and noticed that his hand shook as he raised the cup to his lips. But driving a motor-car at a rapid rate might easily produce this effect. Then I handed him a cigar and lit one myself.

"Rather late for a ride, isn't it?" I said, after a slight pause.

"Not a bit, not a bit," he answered, hastily. "It is as bright as day and the roads clear of traffic. Come, it will do you good. We can finish our cigars in the car."

"Yes," I replied, thoughtfully, "or at any rate the draught will finish them for us."

"Look here, Scott," he continued, in a lower voice, leaning over the table and looking me straight in the eyes, "I particularly want you to come. In fact, you *must* come—to oblige me. I want you to see something which I have seen. I am a little doubtful of its actual existence."

I looked at him sharply. His voice was cold and quiet, but his eyes were certainly a bit too bright. I should say that he was in a state of intense excitement, yet with all his nerves well under control. I laughed a little uneasily.

"Very well, Lord Beden," I replied, rising from my chair. "I will come. But you will excuse me saying that you don't look well to-night. I think you are rather overdoing this motor business. It shakes the system up a good deal, you know."

"I am not well, Scott," he said. "But you cannot cure me."

I said no more, and left the room to put on my glasses and an overcoat.

We set off through the village at about ten miles an hour. It was a glorious night and the moon shone clear in the sky, but I noticed a bank of heavy black clouds in the west, and thought it not unlikely that we should have a thunderstorm. The atmosphere had been suffocating all day, and it was only the motion of the car that created the cool and pleasant breeze which blew against our faces.

When we came to the church we turned sharp to the right on to the Oxminster Road.



"WOULD YOU CARE TO COME FOR A RIDE?"

It ran in a perfectly straight white line for three miles, then it began to wind and ascend the Oxbourne Hills, finally disappearing in the darkness of some woods which extend for nearly five miles over the summit in the direction of Oxminster.

"Where are we going to?" I asked, settling myself firmly in my seat.

"Oxminster," he replied, rather curtly. "Please keep your eyes open and tell me if you see anything on the road."

As he spoke he pulled the lever farther towards him and the great machine shot forward with a sudden plunge which would have unseated me if I had not been prepared for something of the sort. We quickly gathered up speed: hedges and trees went past us like a flash; the dust whirled up into the moonlight like a silver cloud, and before five minutes had elapsed we were at the foot of the hills and were tearing up the slope at almost the same terrific pace.

As we ascended the foliage began to thicken and close in upon us on either side; then the moon disappeared, and only our powerful lamps illuminated the darkness ahead of us. The car was a magnificent hill-climber, but the gradient soon became so steep that the pace slackened down to about eight miles an hour. Lord Beden

had not spoken a word since he told me where we were going to, but he had kept his eyes steadily fixed on the broad circle of light in front of the car. I began to find the silence and darkness oppressive, and, to say the truth, was not quite comfortable in my own mind about my companion's sanity. I took off my glasses and tried to pierce the darkness on either side. The moon filtered through the trees and made strange shadows in the depths of the woods, but there was nothing else to be seen, and ahead of us there was only a white streak of road disappearing into blackness. Then suddenly my companion let go of the steering-gear with one hand and clutched me by the arm.

"Listen, Scott!" he cried; "do you hear it?"

I listened attentively, and at first heard nothing but the throb of the motor and a faint rustling among the trees as a slight breeze began to stir through the wood. Then I noticed that the beat of the piston was not quite the same as usual. It sounded jerky and irregular, faint and loud alternately, and I had an idea that it had considerably quickened in speed.

"I hear nothing, Lord Beden," I replied, "except that the engine sounds a little erratic. It ought not to make so much fuss over this hill."

"If you listen more carefully," he said, "you will understand. That sound is the beat of two pistons, and one of them is some way off."

I listened again. He was right. There was certainly another engine throbbing in the distance.

"I cannot see any lights," I answered, looking first in front of us and then into the darkness behind. "But it's another motor, I suppose. It does not appear to me to be anything out of the way."

He did not reply, but replaced his hand on the steering-gear and peered anxiously ahead. I began to feel a bit worried about him. It

was strange that he should get so excited about the presence of another motor-car in the neighbourhood. I was not reassured either when, in re-arranging the rug about my legs, I touched something hard in his pocket. I passed my fingers lightly over it, and had no doubt whatever that it was a revolver. I began to be sorry I had come. A revolver is not a necessary tool for the proper running of a motor-car.

We were nearly at the top of the hill now, and still in the shadow of the trees. The road here runs for more than a mile along the summit before it begins to descend, and half-way along the level another road crosses it at right angles, leading one way down a steep slope to Little Stanway, and the other along the top of the Oxbourne Hills to Kelston and Rutherton, two small villages some miles away on the edge of the moors.

We had scarcely reached the level when a few heavy drops of rain began to fall, and, looking up, I saw that the moon was no longer visible through the branches overhead. A minute later there was a low roll of thunder in the distance, and for an instant the scenery ahead of us flashed bright and faded into darkness. I turned up the collar of my coat.

The car was now moving almost at full speed, but to my surprise, before we had gone a quarter of a mile, Lord Beden slowed it down and finally brought it to a full stop with the brake. Then he appeared to be listening attentively for something, but the rising wind and pouring rain had begun to make an incessant noise among the trees, and the thunder had become more loud and continuous. I strained my sense of hearing to the utmost, but I could hear nothing beyond the sounds of the elements.

"What is the matter?" I queried, impatiently. "Are we going to stop here?"

"Yes," he replied, curtly. "That is to say, if you have no objection. There is a certain amount of shelter."

I drew a cigar from my pocket and, after several attempts, managed to light it. To say the truth, I was in hopes that we should go no farther. The downward descent, three-quarters of a mile ahead of us, was about one in ten, and I did not feel much inclined to let my companion take me down a hill of that sort.

Then, for a few seconds, the rustling of the wind and pattering of the rain ceased among the trees, and once more I could distinctly hear the thud, thud, thud of an engine. It might have been a motor-car, but it certainly

sounded to me more like the noise a traction engine would make. As we listened the sound came nearer and nearer and appeared to be on our left, still some distance down the hill. Then the storm broke out again with fresh fury, and we could hear nothing else. Lord Beden pulled the lever towards him and we ran slowly forward until we were within thirty yards of the cross-roads, when he again brought the machine to a standstill.

The noise had become much louder now, and was even audible above the roar of the wind and rain. It certainly came from somewhere on our left. I looked down through the trees, and thought I saw a faint red glow some way down the hill. Lord Beden saw it too, and pointed to it with a trembling hand.

"Looks like a fire in the wood," I said, carelessly. I did not very much care what it was.

"Don't be a fool," he replied, sharply. "Can't you see it's moving?"

Yes, he was right. It was certainly moving, and in a few seconds it was hidden by a thicker mass of foliage. I did not, however, see anything very noticeable about it. It was evidently coming up the road to our left, and was probably a belated traction engine returning home from the reaping. I was more than ever convinced of my companion's insanity and wished that I was safe at home. I had half a mind to get off the car and walk, but he had by now managed to infect me with some of his own fear and excitement, and I did not quite fancy being left with no swifter mode of progression than my feet.

The thumping sound came nearer and nearer, and, as we heard it more distinctly, was even more suggestive of a traction engine. Then I saw a red light through the trees like the glow of a furnace, and not more than fifty yards away from us. My companion laid his left hand on the lever and stared intently at the corner.

Then a rather peculiar thing happened. Whatever it was that had been lumbering slowly up the hill like a gigantic snail suddenly shot across the road in front of us like a streak of smoke and flame, and through the trees to our right I could see the red glow spinning up the road to Kelston at over thirty miles an hour. Almost simultaneously Lord Beden pulled down the lever and I instinctively clutched the seat with both hands. We shot forward, took the corner with about an inch to spare between us and



"IT SUDDENLY SHOT ACROSS THE ROAD IN FRONT OF US."

the ditch, and dashed off along the road in hot pursuit. But the red glow had got at least a quarter of a mile's start, and I could not see what it proceeded from. A flash of lightning, however, showed a dark mass flying before us in a cloud of smoke. It looked something like a large waggon with a chimney sticking out of it, and sparks streamed out of the back of it until they looked like the tail of a comet.

"What the deuce is it?" I said.

"You'll see when we come up to it," the Earl answered, between his teeth. "We shall go faster in a few minutes."

We were, however, going quite fast enough for me, and though I have ridden on many motors since, and occasionally at a greater speed, I shall never forget that ride along the Kelston Road. The powerful machine beneath us trembled as though it were going to fall to pieces, the rain lashed our faces like the thongs of a whip, the thunder almost deafened us, the lightning first blinded us with its flashes and then left us in more confusing darkness, and, to crown all, a dense volume of smoke poured from the machine in front and hid the light of our own lamps. It would be hard to imagine worse conditions

for a motor ride, and a man who could keep a steady hand on the steering-gear under circumstances like these was a man indeed. I should not have cared to try it, even in the daytime. But Lord Beden's luck was with him still, and we moved as though guided by some unseen hand.

"You will find a small lever by your side, Scott," he said, after a long pause. "Pull it towards you until it gives a click. It is an invention of my

own." I found the handle and, following out his instructions, saw the arc of light from our lamps shoot another fifty yards ahead, leaving the ground immediately in front of the car in darkness. We had gained considerably. The light just impinged on the streaming tail of sparks.

"At last!" my companion muttered. "He has always had half a mile's start before, and the oil has given out before I could catch him. But he cannot escape us now."

"What is it, Lord Beden?"

"I am glad you see it," he replied. "I thought before to-night that it was a fancy of my brain."

"Of course I see it," I said, sharply. "I am not blind. But what is it?"

He did not answer, but a flash of lightning showed me his face, and I did not repeat the question.

Mile after mile we spun along the lonely country road, but never gaining another inch. We dashed through Kelston like a streak of light. It was fortunate that all the inhabitants were in bed. Then we shot out on to a road leading across the open moor, which stretches from here to the sea, twenty

miles away, and I remembered that eight miles from Kelston there was a deep descent into the valley of the Stour, and it was scarcely possible that we could escape destruction. I quickly made up my mind to overpower Lord Beden and gain control of the machine.

Then we suddenly began to sweep down a long and gentle gradient, and second after second our speed increased until the arc of light shone on the machine ahead of us, and I could see what manner of thing it was that we pursued.

It was, I suppose, a kind of motor-car, but unlike anything I had ever seen before, and bearing no more resemblance to a modern machine than a bone-shaker of twenty years ago does to the modern "free-wheel." It appeared to be built of iron, and was painted a dead black. In the fore-part of the structure a 5ft. fly-wheel spun round at a terrific speed, and various bars and beams moved rapidly backwards and forwards. The chimney was quite 10ft. in height, and poured out a dense volume of smoke. On a small platform behind, railed in by a stout iron rail, stood a tall man with his back to us. His dark hair, which must have reached nearly to his shoulders, streamed behind him in the wind. In each hand he grasped a huge lever, and he was apparently gazing steadily into the darkness before him, though it seemed to me that he might just as well have shut his eyes, for the machine had no lamps, and the only light in the whole concern streamed out from the half-open furnace door.

Then, to my amazement, I saw the man take his hands off the levers and coolly proceed to shovel coal into the roaring fire. I held my breath, expecting to see the flying mass of iron shoot off the side of the road and turn head over heels down the sloping grass. But nothing happened. The machine apparently required no guidance, and proceeded on its way as smoothly and swiftly as before.

I took hold of my companion's arm and called his attention to this somewhat strange circumstance. He only laughed.

"Look at the smoke," he cried. "That is rather strange too." I looked up and saw it pouring over our heads in a long straight cloud, but I did not notice anything odd about it, and I said so.

"Can you smell it?" he continued. I sniffed, and noticed for the first time that there had been no smell of smoke at all, though in the earlier part of the journey we

had been half blinded with it. I began to feel uncomfortable. There was certainly something unusual about the machine in front of us, and I came to the conclusion that we had had about enough of this kind of sport.

"I think we will go back, Lord Beden," I remarked, pleasantly, moving one hand towards the lever.

"You will go back to perdition, Scott," he answered, quietly. "If you meddle with me we shall be smashed to pieces. We are going forty miles an hour, and if you distract my attention for a single instant I won't answer for the consequences."

I felt the truth of what he said, and put my hand ostentatiously in my pocket. It was quite evident that I couldn't interfere with him, and equally evident that if we went on as we were going now we should be dashed to pieces. My only hope was that we should speedily accomplish whatever mad purpose Lord Beden had in his mind, although by now I began to think that he had no other object than suicide. The valley of the Stour was only two miles off.

But we had been gaining inch by inch down the slope, and were now not more than thirty yards from the machine in front of us. Showers of sparks whirled into our faces, and I kept one arm before my eyes. I soon found, however, that, for some reason or other, the sparks did not burn my skin, and I was able to resume a more comfortable position and study the occupant of the car.

His figure somehow seemed strangely familiar to me, and I tried hard to recollect where I had seen those square shoulders and long, lean limbs before. I wished I could see the man's face, for I was quite certain that I should recognise it. But he never looked back, and appeared to be absolutely unconscious of our presence so close behind him.

Nearer we crept, and still nearer, until our front wheels were not more than 10ft. from the platform. The glow of the furnace bathed my companion's face in crimson light, and the figure of the man in front of us stood out like a black demon toiling at the eternal fires.

"Be careful, Lord Beden," I cried. "We shall be into it."

He turned to me with a smile of triumph, and I thought I saw the light of madness in his eyes.

"Do you know what I am going to do?" he said, in a low voice, putting his lips close to my ear. "I am going to break it to bits. We have a little speed in hand yet, and when we get to the slope of the Stour Valley I shall break the cursed thing to bits."

"For Heaven's sake," I cried, "put the brake on, Lord Beden. Are you mad?" and I gripped him by the arm. He shook my hand off, and I clung to my seat with every muscle of my body strained to the utmost, for as I spoke there was a flash of lightning, and I saw the road dipping, dipping, dipping, and far below the gleam of water among dark trees, and on the height above a large building with many spires and towers. I idly called to mind that it was the Rockshire County Asylum.

Our speed quickened horribly, and the car began to sway from side to side. I saw my companion pull the lever an inch nearer to him and grip the steering-wheel with both hands. Then suddenly the road seemed to fall away beneath us; we sprang off the ground and dropped downward and forward like a stone flung from a precipice. We were

of us, until the man seemed to be almost touching our feet, and at last I saw his face—a wild, dark face with madness in the eyes, and the face of Lord Beden, as I had seen a portrait of him in Beden Hall taken thirty years ago.

My companion rose on his seat and grappled with his own likeness, but he seemed to be only clutching the air, and neither car nor occupant appeared to have any tangible substance. Steadily and silently we bored our way clean through the machine, inch by inch, foot by foot; through the blazing furnace, through the framework of the boiler, through bolt and bar and stanchion, through whirling fly-wheel and pulsing shaft and piston, until there was nothing beyond us but the dip of the white road, and, looking back, I saw the whole dark mass running behind our back wheels.



"WE SPRANG OFF THE GROUND AND DROPPED DOWNWARD AND FORWARD."

going to smash clean through the machine in front of us.

For five seconds I held my breath, only awaiting the awful crash of splintering wood and iron and the shock that would fling us fifty feet from our seats. But we only touched the ground with a sickening thud an inch behind the other machine, and then a wonderful thing happened. We began to slowly pierce the rail and platform in front

Lord Beden was still standing and tearing at the air with his fingers. Our car was running without guidance, and I sprang to the steering-wheel and reversed the lever, but it was too late. We struck something at the side of the road and the whole machine made a leap from the ground. There was a rush of air, an awful shock and crash, and then—darkness!

A week afterwards in the hospital they told



"STEADILY AND SILENTLY WE BORED OUR WAY CLEAN THROUGH THE MACHINE."

me Lord Beden was dead. He had fallen on a large piece of scrap-iron by the roadside, and nearly every bone in his body had been broken. I myself had had a miraculous escape by falling into a thick clump of gorse, and had got off with a broken arm and dislocated collar-bone, but I was not able to get about for two months. I said nothing of what had happened, and the accident required but little explanation. Motor-car accidents are common enough, especially on slopes like that of the Stour Valley.

When I was able to get about, however, I visited the scene of the disaster. A friend of mine, one of the doctors at the County Lunatic Asylum, called for me and drove me over to the place. The smash had occurred nearly half-way down the hillside, close

to a ruined shed. The ground was covered with gorse and bracken, but here and there huge pieces of rusty iron were scattered about. Some of them were sharp and brown and ugly, but many were overgrown with creeping convolvulus. They looked as if they had once been parts of some great machine.

"A curious coincidence," said my companion, as we drove away from the place.

"What do you mean?"

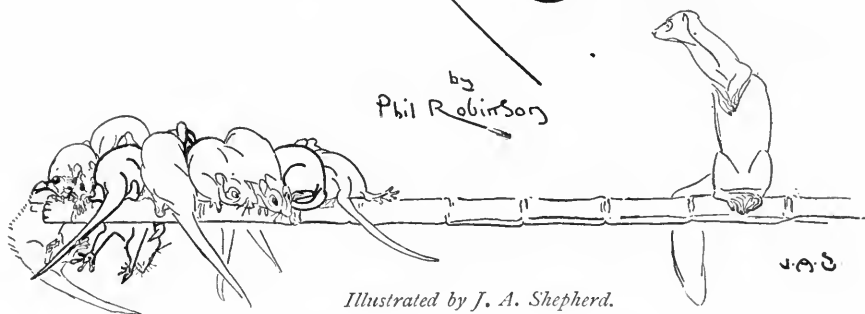
"I have been told," he continued, "that thirty years ago this old shed was used by the late Earl's elder brother. He was a mechanical genius, and they say that his efforts to work

out some particular invention in a practical form drove him off his head. He was allowed to have this place as a workshop, and, under the supervision of two keepers, worked on his invention till the day of his death. It was thought that perhaps he would recover his reason if he ever accomplished the task. But in some mysterious way his plans were stolen from him no fewer than three times, and after the third time the poor fellow lost heart and destroyed himself. I have heard it whispered by one of my colleagues up yonder that the late Earl was not altogether ignorant of these thefts, but this is probably only gossip. All the fragments of iron you saw lying about were parts of the machine. Heaven knows what it was."

I did not venture any suggestion on this point, but I think I could have done so.

The Planters and The Rats.

by
Phil Robinson



Illustrated by J. A. Shepherd.



ONCE upon a time every planter in Jamaica grew sugar-cane, and the thoughts and the talk of the island were about sugar and the molasses that come from sugar and the rum that comes from molasses—except when they thought and talked about rats: the rat that ate the canes that gave the sugar that gave the molasses that gave them the rum. It ate from morning till night, and not, like many other thieves, from night till morning. For it slept all night and ate sugar all day.

A cocksure, do-as-you-please sort of rat that went about, as it were, whistling with its hands in its pockets and a general Bank Holiday kind of air. Ashamed of itself? Not in the least. On the contrary, it went scrambling about ostentatiously among the

canes, and the waving of the great feathery seed-plumes marked its track as it went plunging across the crops.

Little negro boys with long sticks were paid to chase the rats, and terriers were sent in to worry them. But the terriers preferred to chivvy the little negro boys; so that the rats put "the thumb of scorn to the

nose of derision" and watched the fun.

The planters also tried cats.

Now, cats have not got a very lofty sense of moral responsibility. So that when they found that they were expected to catch rats (and of a particularly nimble sort, too) as a daily duty they decided it was "not good enough." Besides, rats are not first-rate eating. And it very soon came to pass that these idle apprentices scorned the task they were set to



"A COCKSURE, DO-AS-YOU-PLEASE SORT OF RAT."

do and came to a friendly understanding with the rats, and lived in comfort and without exertion upon the fat little chickens that, in those days, used to go maundering about among the sugar-canes, and that snoozed for hours together in the bush. And the rats, so to speak, whistled louder than ever, and went about with their thumbs in their waistcoat arm-holes as who should say, "We and our friends the cats."

Then the sugar planters were greatly perplexed, till one day a man who had lived in Yucatan, and had often had brain fever there, got up and said: "In the country I came from there are enormous bull-frogs which eat the young of rats and eke of mice. Let us get some." So they got some bull-frogs from Yucatan; and they were so big and bellowed so loudly that the owners of the ship they



J. A. S.

"THE RATS WHISTLED LOUDER THAN EVER."

came over in wanted to charge freight for the bull-frogs as cattle. Then the planters turned them into the sugar-cane fields to eat the young of the rats and eke of mice, as the man who used to have brain-fever in Yucatan had promised they should do.

But matters had evidently not been properly explained to the bull-frogs, for all that they did was to go very slowly over the ground like land-surveyors, measuring it with long strides, and stopping every now and again, and looking as if they were totting something up in their heads. And the cats moved out of their way respectfully as they came sprawling along in such a solemn, business-like way, and the rats looked down at them with surprise and scratched their heads. They would have liked to be saucy, but the bull-frogs had too impressive an appearance, and they felt



J. A. S.

"ALL THE BULL-FROGS DID WAS TO GO VERY SLOWLY OVER THE GROUND LIKE LAND-SURVEYORS."

as little boys in the parish church do when the beadle walks about amongst them.

At last the new-comers got to the other edge of the field, and then the biggest of them, after clearing his throat as if he were

in it. Let this be as it may be, the bull-frogs would not stop in the dry cane-fields, and a long time afterwards the man from Yucatan remembered that it was young

water-rats that the bull-frogs ate, and he advised them to get over some water-rats so that the bull-frogs might be made useful; but they put it all down to the brain fever he had had so much in the country which he came from. And to this day there are great bull-frogs in the ditches and pools in Jamaica, who grumble and shout for rum all night and eat ducklings all day.

So the rats were left alone for awhile, until one day a man who had lived many years in India, and had suffered repeatedly from

sunstrokes there, said that in India there was "an animal like a very large ferret with a bushy tail which was kept half tame about the houses in order to rid them of rats and snakes and other vermin, and it was called a mongoose." "Let us get some mongooses at once," said the other planters.

So they sent to India and got some and turned them loose among the sugar-canes. And the cats saw them and did not like them, for when they spat at a mongoose and said rude things and tried



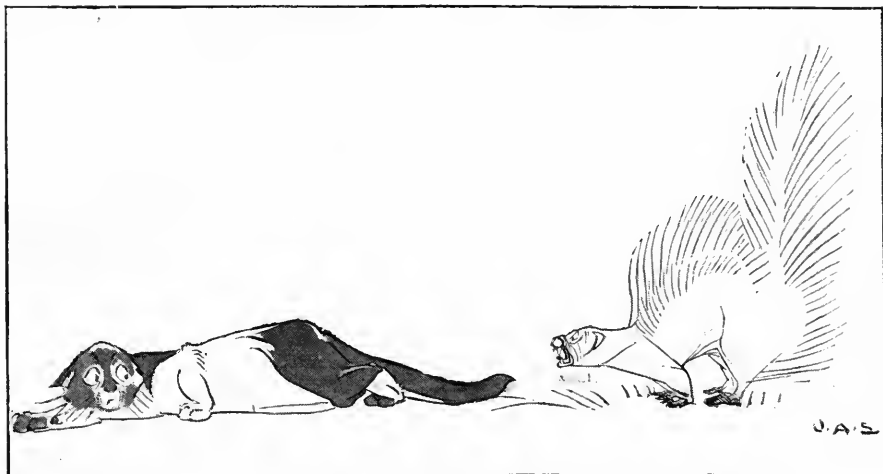
"THIS IS NO PLACE FOR ME."

going to make a speech, said gravely, in a voice that seemed to come from his trouser-pockets: "This is no place for me."

Then they all went sprawling out of the field into the irrigation ditches and the swampy bits of waste land and, sitting up to their chins in the mud, began bellowing with all their might, "Take me 'ome," "Take me 'ome," and answering one another, "No, they won't," "No, they won't." But some people think that they say, "Jug-o'-rum," "Jug-o'-rum," which is very likely, for bull-frogs are thirsty old souls, and rum is the best thing you can drink when you are in Jamaica, especially out of a jug that has lime-juice and sugar and iced water



"THE CATS SAW THEM AND DID NOT LIKE THEM."



"THE CATS SLUNK AWAY."

to look big by putting up their fur, the mongoose would spit back at them and fluff out its fur and look big too. So the cats slunk away.

As for the rats, they were completely upset. If they had had time to do it, they might have affected airs of innocence and addressed the mongooses, as boys caught by

ing the rat was dead. The rats thought it shocking, for these pink-nosed wretches in grey coats wasted no time in argument but, like irresponsible special constables, knocked them on the head right and left. And apparently, too, all for the fun of the thing, for they couldn't eat half the rats they killed. And as there was no pleasing them, so there



"THE RATS BEGAN TO FEEL THAT A GREAT CHANGE HAD TAKEN PLACE."

Bobbies do, with "Please, sir," "Yes, sir," "No, sir," "It wasn't me, sir," "It was the other rat, sir." But there was no time for anything of the sort. "Halloa," said the mongoose, "there's a rat," and in a twinkl-

ing the rat was dead. The rats thought it shocking, for these pink-nosed wretches in grey coats wasted no time in argument but, like irresponsible special constables, knocked them on the head right and left. And apparently, too, all for the fun of the thing, for they couldn't eat half the rats they killed. And as there was no pleasing them, so there

So the rats began to feel that a great change had taken place.

As for the little negro boys with sticks, and the terriers and the cats and the bull-frogs, they thoroughly understood them, just as pick-pockets understand the ordinary constable, but the "slimness" of the mongoose was a novel experience, and at first, flurried as they were and, so to speak, metagrobolized, they played into the hands of the enemy at every point. But in time the rats adapted their own tactics to those of the mongoose, and instead of trying to hide in holes or to run away over the flat from their swift-footed foes they abandoned the level ground altogether and took to the trees, intending to wait for the clouds to roll by. Now, the mongoose cannot climb up a tree, so a remnant of the host of rats survived. But they were not as they had been. They didn't go along whistling now with a jaunty, cigarette-in-the-mouth air, but kept out of sight and hearing as much as possible, and with the best grace they could pretended that "high life" suited them—well, not exactly "down to the ground"—but sufficiently.

The planters were delighted, patted each other on the back, and, metaphorically, patted the mongooses, too.

As for the mongooses, they thought themselves "no small potatoes," as the saying is, and went about with the confident familiarity of old valued servants, and basked openly in the sun in groups, like Greenwich pensioners. But even a mongoose cannot keep a family alive upon compliments alone, nor pay its rent and live respectably upon public applause. So it found out almost immediately. It was hungry. In fact, he, she, it, and they were all hungry. There was no use in going round the banana trees and the cocoanut palms and looking up at the rats washing

their faces on their towers of refuge, so they gave that up. Nor was anything to be gained now by searching rat-holes. And meanwhile everybody was getting hungrier and hungrier.

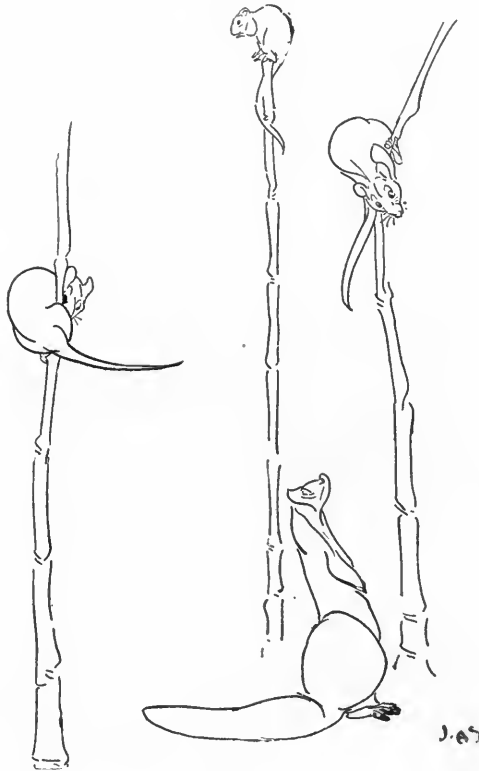
So they fastened their belts a hole tighter and went to other places to look for something else to eat. And they had not far to go. For in the bush, that is to say among the crops of cocoa and coffee and guinea-grass and the groves of orange and pimento, they found a multitude of harmless snakes and lizards who did good work by eating harmful insects. But the mongooses had to

live, and so they began to eat them all up. Great was the dismay of these genteel garden snakes when they found out what was happening, for the mongoose munched them all up as if they were sticks of celery and never seemed to have had enough, though they got as fat as the old gentlemen in white waistcoats whom you see coming out of restaurants and strolling down Piccadilly on summer evenings.

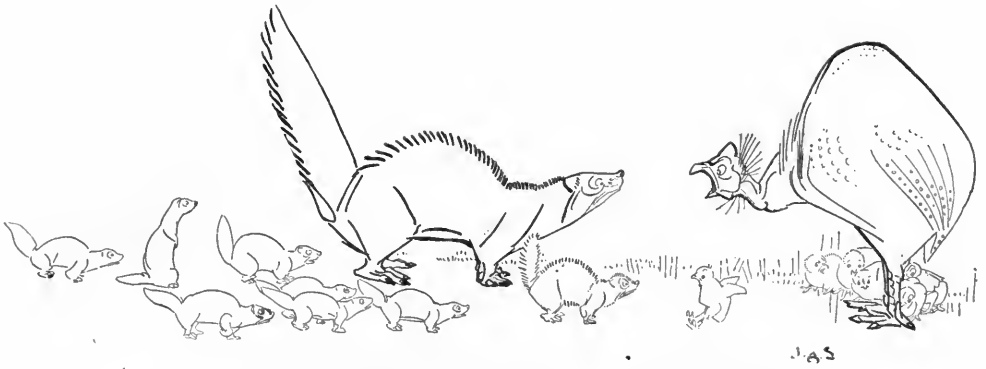
Very dismal, too, were the reflections of the lizards, as dismal as those of the oysters when they saw the carpenter begin to cut thin bread and butter for himself and the walrus. For the

mongoose made no more of them than you would of salted almonds during dinner, ate them by the half-dozen as hors d'oeuvres and, tooth-pick in mouth, leaned back comfortably to wait for the next course that happened to come past.

Very often this would be a bird—a quail or a guinea-fowl or a ground-dove. But the mongoose did not mind a bit which it was. It took them as they came, and the more the merrier. But it was woe for the poor mother birds with their nurseries of little downy chicks when, creeping about among the



"THEY TOOK TO THE TREES."



"THEY FOUND THEMSELVES FACE TO FACE WITH A MOTHER MONGOOSE."

shrubs, picking up their food of seed and insect, they found themselves face to face with a mother mongoose with her family of eight hungry, bloodthirsty, red-eyed little ones around her. Sunday-school children out with their teacher suddenly confronted in their harmless necessary walk by a party of ravenous cannibals in search of a meal could not have been more horrified, nor with better reason. For the mongoose is a pitiless creature.

But, after all, such fun (for the mongoose) could not go on for ever. Some day it *must* come to the last snake, the ultimate lizard, the concluding quail, and the final dove. And so the end arrived. "All gone!" as children say of the finished porridge. There

rest. All friendships were dissolved. Neighbours, or those that used to be neighbours, now eyed one another hungrily, askance, from opposite sides of the road. Mongoose saw in mongoose only a possible meal. When two came in sight each, as it were, tucked his napkin under his chin and shook up the sauce bottle.

And how will it end? Who can tell? Perhaps some day there will be left only two mongooses in Jamaica—the toughest two of all the mongooses — and next day there will be only one, in another week none, then the rats will all come down again out of the palm trees and the bananas, and whistle and romp in the sugar-canes as of old. And the



"NEIGHBOURS EYED ONE ANOTHER HUNGRILY, ASKANCE."

was nothing left for the mongooses to eat ; nothing—but each other.

Then set in a miserable time. With knife and fork in one pocket and the cruets in another they crept about, dodging one another, careworn and haggard, like criminals under constant pursuit. Perpetually suspicious of each other's appetites, they got no

little negro boys will come back with their long sticks, and all will go on as before, and to the fowls and the doves the memory of the mongoose will be only as the memory of a bad dream.

And the planters and wise men of Jamaica will then have to think of some other plan for keeping the rats from the sugar-canes.



AN air of silence and depression hung over Lakeview Castle. The eldest son of a long-lived family lay on the brink of death in a big, old-fashioned room, whose broad windows looked out on a fiery red sunset, bathing the leafless trees in burnished light.

Digby Terence's father and grandfather had both been centenarians, and it came as a surprise to the family that the present head of the clan should be declining at the premature age of seventy-two.

"A general collapse," said the doctor. "I am afraid he won't last many days. He must not be told the end is near—the great thing is to keep him cheerful."

Digby's younger brother nodded.

"We try to cheer him up about himself, but it seems rather to annoy him than otherwise. You see, doctor, Digby is a very difficult man to manage. He's a bit of a crank. His cynicism makes everyone afraid of him, and he has more enemies than anyone I know. I suppose it does not suit a fellow to be a bachelor all his life; in old age he becomes crabbed and selfish. My wife tries her best to keep him in a good temper; but he seems to resent our being here, and is positively rude to his nurses. Several more distant relatives have visited him since his serious condition, but, of course, dared not show they had come to say good-bye. He thinks we do not sympathize with his illness

and are entertaining a house-party on his premises for our own amusement. It makes matters very awkward. The only creature he has a soft spot in his heart for is Mimi, my sister Clare's child."

"Ah! the little girl I met in the hall. She lives here, I understand?"

"Yes, Digby adopted her two years ago. Her mother is very poor, and has to make her own living."

The doctor looked surprised; such a thing seemed incredible with a wealthy brother living unmarried in his great, lake-bound castle.

"You see," explained the informant, "Digby and his step-sister are not on speaking terms. At one time he took an intense interest in her, for she is young and very beautiful. He meant her to do well and make a brilliant match under his chaperonage. Instead, she fell in love with a penniless subaltern. Digby objected to the marriage, so she took the affair into her own hands and eloped. A year later her husband died; Clare had no money of her own, and Digby has never spoken to her since. When Mimi's education came to be considered she wrote him a desperate letter. He consented to bring up the child on condition that the mother gave her entirely to him. It was a terrible struggle, but Clare did the right thing, and very sensibly fell in with the cruel request. She is now companion to a tyrannical old lady, while Digby enjoys the sunshine of sweet little Mimi's presence. I am telling you this, because Clare wants to see Digby before he dies, and begs me to let her take him by surprise. I know he would be furious; I have therefore hardened my heart and forbidden her the house. Am I doing right, doctor?"

"Certainly! Your action was fully justified. It is most important that Mr. Terence should not be excited." As the doctor left he

caught sight of a little fair head on the stairs and the prettiest child's face he had ever seen.

John Terence, Digby's younger brother, called Mimi to him.

"Your uncle wants to see you this evening," he said. "Mind you are very quiet, because, you know, he is seriously ill. Nurse Tindall will fetch you presently."

Mimi made no reply, but just nodded and choked back something very like a sob. She saw only the soft, kind side of Uncle Digby—the side it had taken such a very small child to discover. She knew nothing of his harshness to her mother—his cold, hard attitude to the world in general—for she had crept into the holiest of holies, the inner core of the old man's heart.

Since his illness she had never seen him alone. Nurse Tindall led her in by the hand every morning to kiss him, and whisked her away again, under the plea that the doctor was expected. To-day the doctor had called twice, and Mimi heard it whispered her uncle would die.

Digby lay with his eyes fixed on the window. The red glow crept into the room—he could see the sky from his bed. He felt very weak and near the brink, yet he told himself bitterly that not a soul in the house realized that he was so ill. His brother, his sister-in-law, his cousins, even the doctor came to him with smiles and cheerful talk of his recovery. It made him almost eager for death, to prove his illness was by no means imaginary. He fancied to see little Mimi quite alone—like the rest, she would have no idea of his critical condition, but he could forgive her, because she was a child.

The door opened very softly and the fair-haired mite stole in. At a peremptory order from Digby Nurse Tindall retired, then he beckoned Mimi on to his bed. She clambered up, seating herself beside him on the crimson quilt. Her soft, gold head fell lovingly on his shoulder; he felt warm lips pressed to his withered cheek—never before had the

child kissed him with such intensity of feeling.

He looked at her curiously. Under the long dark lashes gleamed a mist of tears, while eyes like wet violets gazed sadly into his.

"Why are you crying, little one?" he asked.

Oddly enough, he never connected her tears with himself; he waited to hear some childish complaint.

She put her knuckles in her eyes and the rosebud mouth trembled.

"They say you are going to die, and—and I don't like it at all," she answered, simply. "Couldn't you manage not to die, uncle? Everybody downstairs seems quite sure about it. I heard the doctor say he was afraid you would not last many days. I ran away and cried till I couldn't cry any more. I shall be so lonely when you've gone!"

She clung to him, as if her baby arms might hold him back from the unknown terror; he felt the damp splash of her silent tears.

Digby raised himself on his pillows, a flush of excitement lighting his pale cheeks.

"They say I shall die," he murmured.

"You are absolutely certain they say that?"

"Quite sure—all the people here talk



"‘THEY SAY I SHALL DIE,’ HE MURMURED.”

of nothing else. The cousins came because the doctor told Uncle George he had better write to all the family. I don't think one of them begged you to try and live; and Nurse Tindall said I wasn't to ask any favours, so

I could not talk when she was in the room, her eyes glared at me so !”

As Digby listened to these startling revelations, betrayed in all innocence, a strange revulsion of feeling swept over him.

So these people, after all, had been making a fool of the old man, acting a part before his face, discussing the true issues behind his back ! They had gathered to the castle to see him die. They could “talk of nothing else.”

When he fancied they meant him to live his spirits instinctively yearned for rest. Now that they had passed his death sentence, condemned the sinking ship, a stubborn resistance, a great wave of will-power, dominated him. It seemed to strengthen the beating of his heart, to send the blood coursing once more freely through his veins, to quicken the springs of human action, to defy weakness and encourage strength.

There and then he resolved to triumph over the flesh, to disappoint expectant relatives, to snap his fingers in the doctor's face. Digby's pugnacious tendencies asserted their powerful influence. Grimly amused, he pictured the scene below, remembering, with a flash of strange, distorted humour, a strong family superstition.

Whenever a Terence was about to “shuffle off this mortal coil” it was said that a picture invariably fell the night before in the dining-room.

“If to-night,” he told himself, “my picture fell, my life would not be worth a farthing rushlight in their eyes to-morrow ! The very day for me to assert my strength, to prove the victory of mind over matter, to show the folly of vain superstitions.”

“Mimi,” he whispered, “if I promise to try and stay with you, will you do something for me ? It may be a little difficult, but I want you not to tell anyone. Small as you are, I believe my ‘Baby-Girl’ could keep a secret.”

He always called her his “Baby-Girl” when she especially pleased him. Mimi's eyes brightened, till they looked like dew-drops in the sun.

“I was thinking to-day I should love to be able to do something for you. I told Uncle George, but he laughed at me, and said, ‘Rubbish ! What could you do ?’ I couldn't think of anything, so I didn't answer.”

“Well, listen now. I am going to talk quite low in your ear. You know my writing-desk ?”

“Yes.”

“In the second drawer on the left-hand side you will find a big clasp-knife, open and ready for use. I want you to hide it in your room. In the middle of the night, when everyone is in bed, creep downstairs to the dining-room, climb up on the sideboard, and cut the cord of my portrait ! Leave the picture lying face downwards, just as it will fall. Say nothing to a soul. You will please me very much if you manage this successfully.”

As Mimi listened she turned very cold. No terror to her was more awful than darkness. The gloomy old castle, when daylight faded, became full of strange spectres and horrible phantoms.

The child possessed a vivid and somewhat morbid imagination. To walk alone through the corridors at dead of night, to face the silent, armoured figures in the hall, the eyes of weird faces on the tapestried walls—this meant something almost more than human endurance could bear !

Yet her fond little heart reminded her that Uncle Digby asked it as a favour ; surely a personal sacrifice for him would be worth a short spell of agony, however keen.

She concealed her feelings with an effort ; she hoped he would not notice how she trembled.

“I'll do it,” she said, very softly, “and I'll keep the secret close, uncle, dear. I don't think anyone would guess. It seems a very funny thing to do, but I suppose there is some reason I shall never understand. I don't mind about not understanding, if it will make you glad. I shall stay awake till all the lights are out, and I won't wear any shoes.”

“Good little girl ! I knew I could trust you,” answered the sick man, with such energy in his tone that he fancied he gripped suddenly his old healthful self and threw off the lassitude which bound him to his bed. “Don't try to understand ; I would rather you did not. Just do it unquestioningly, as a matter of duty—an action of love.”

He took the round, pink face in his bloodless hands and kissed it many times. Inwardly a sense of ribald merriment at the trick he was ordering made him chuckle to himself.

“Now,” he said, “I must send you away, or the household will suspect I am not as ill as it supposes. Everybody is double-faced except my ‘Baby-Girl,’ and she tells me the truth—bless her !”

With an expression of extraordinary elation he watched the small figure cross the room

and vanish through the door. She looked back to wave her little hand, and again he repeated, "Bless her!" under his breath.

Mimi was so afraid of falling asleep that she sat up in bed for hours and kept pinching herself to be sure of staying awake. Not that her troubled brain would have allowed her to rest!

Her thoughts were in wild disorder, and her heart went thump, thump against her little white nightgown, till she fancied it might bound out on the counterpane.

Every few minutes she ran to her door to listen, occasionally venturing to the end of the passage to see if the lights were extinguished yet. Each time she felt herself reprieved as the gleam of lamps fell upon her eyes.

Mimi firmly believed that the wildest chaos reigned below when everyone had gone to bed. She was sure the pictures came out of their frames to dance stately minuets; that the tigers which made rugs in the daytime prowled abroad, grinning with open jaws. Even the furniture held high carnival, according to her childish ideas; while the white statues paraded up and down the great marble hall. Lakeview Castle was truly a place to set a child's fancy working. Older folk had been known to fear it at night on account of its mystic, time-hallowed associations.

At last the dreaded hour arrived when all was still. Only the moon crept through the mullioned windows, pointing to the path of duty, which looked so hard to the little, breathless pilgrim. With knife in hand, eyes dilated, and lips set firm to prevent screaming, Mimi's bare feet pattered down a winding staircase, leading to an enormous, ghostly-looking library, filled with curiosities and lined by sombre volumes. Through this room she passed to the hall, where the marble figures ceased their revels, standing back

in dignified array to let her pass. How she reached the far-off dining-room Mimi never quite knew. She was followed by a thousand fears, voices whispered behind every curtain, and the pictures seemed to frown upon the weapon in her hand. With every fibre of her being on the rack she climbed tremblingly upon a high oak chair, and from thence to the massive sideboard. She came face to face at last with Uncle Digby's picture, and a ray of moonlight strayed across it, illuminating the sinister features. A remarkably unflattering likeness this, bringing out all that was worst in the man's nature—a portrait taken long before Mimi stole into his life, making it tenderer where she was concerned.

Mimi thought the picture winked at her in a singularly human manner.

Closing her eyes for very terror she raised her hand and cut sharply through the cord.



"SHE RAISED HER HAND AND CUT SHARPLY THROUGH THE CORD."

The blade executed its work so quickly that she had no time to catch the picture as it fell, and the sound of its falling echoed through the room, giving forth, in the intense silence, a strange rumbling noise. She thought, as she leapt to the ground, that all the doors opened and queer, unearthly figures rushed in—then she remembered no more, save that her bare feet touched the carpet, as she drifted into space.

The dawn was just breaking when Mimi woke to find herself still in the dining-room, lying by the fallen picture. The knife, luckily, slipped from her hand, and rested a few inches away by the carved legs of the sideboard.

Mimi felt very dizzy as she picked herself up and took possession of the knife once more. The place looked less ghostly now the moon had gone; daylight made everything appear more natural again. Evidently no one heard the disturbance, and, reassured, Mimi regained her room, too dazed to feel frightened as she crossed the hall under the immovable stare of the castle's silent guardians.

She crept to bed, burrowing beneath the clothes like a rabbit seeking the shelter of its warren. Her uncle's words came back to her: "Just do it as a matter of duty—an action of love. I believe my 'Baby-Girl' could keep a secret."

She smiled, for the terror was past. Youth lives in the present, which at that moment proved warm, comfortable, and secure.

The following morning she heard nothing directly of the picture. Certainly there was a good deal of whispering, and furtive glances turned repeatedly to the blank space on the wall. All conversation was reduced to an undertone, and gradually Mimi became aware a general impression reigned that Digby Terence would die that day.

"He seems better," George told his wife; "he actually wants to get up. The nurses

see a great change in him. I believe it often happens just before the end."

So they waited expectantly for the fatal hour and the tolling of the passing bell, waited long, till gradually the watchers realized that they had placed themselves too confidently at the gate of Fortune, and the goddess with the golden wings guarded the gate securely, opening it not.

"You are quite a resurrection," said the doctor, surprised to find a grain of gaiety filtering through his patient's words and actions. "I declare you look positively radiant!"

"Don't you know the old saying?" replied Digby, with a twinkle. "Three H's make a man happy—Health, Holiness, and a Head-piece. I can't boast of the second, but I seem, since yesterday, to have got hold of the



first and last, which means I am going to keep up the family reputation and live to be as old as my father and grandfather."

"Superstition is all rot," George informed the doctor, as he related the story of the fallen picture.

"Your brother has brought the most extraordinary will-power to bear on his case," replied the man of science.

"He certainly understands the art of being lucky; he turned the corner just in time."

Lakeview Castle was cleared of guests. Digby Terence and little Mimi found themselves once more alone. Nurses, doctors, relations faded from the scene. Mimi whispered she felt glad, for it seemed so nice to be cosily together. Uncle Digby quite agreed, as he sat over a huge log fire with Mimi on his knee.

"Baby - Girl," he said, solemnly, "I have come to the conclusion that you saved my life."

"How?" she asked, surprised.

"You told me the truth about things; you put me on my mettle. I owe you a debt of gratitude! Now I come to think of it, I can't imagine how I could send you on that wild errand to break the family superstition! I wonder I trusted so small a person! You might have injured yourself with the knife—it was very risky; besides, I forgot you were frightened of the dark. To make up for it all, and wipe away the shadow of the past, I want you to remember this Christmas as the brightest in your life, to choose any treat you like, and take as long as you please to think it over."

Mimi quivered with sudden joy. "I know what I should choose, without any thinking!" she said.

He looked at her curiously; the childish face wore a strangely intense and expectant expression.

"I should ask for mother to come," she continued. "You used to say it was impossible, but I believe you might manage to make it possible, if you tried very hard."

The small voice echoed an unspoken yearning which, since his illness, involuntarily crept into Digby's heart.

He sighed deeply and stared at the fire. "Suppose you write and ask her," he said.

Mimi sprang up, clapping her hands. She



"I SHOULD ASK FOR MOTHER TO COME."

ran across to a big desk, arming herself with a quill pen. "May she stay for always, or is it only to be a Christmas treat?" came in a little treble from the desk.

"It would be a pity to let her go away," said the old man, slowly. "Christmas is a time of festivity—it should be always Christmas for you, Baby-Girl!"

As he spoke a face like Baby-Girl's rose before his mind's eye, an older face, with the same delicate modelling and soft, golden hair. It seemed to smile at him from the ruddy embers, to bring a sense of "Peace on earth and goodwill towards men."

So he sat and dreamed, hearing only the scratch of Mimi's pen, seeing only the smiling, mystic face of his sister, Clare.

French Humorous Artists.

BY MARIE A. BELLOC.



ONE of the peculiarities of a great caricaturist is that his humour resembles that of no one else, for in the province of humorous drawing imitation is by no means the

sincerest form of flattery. No artist who sets out to enliven rather than to depress his patrons has much chance of success unless he can prove himself, whilst appealing to a wide public, original in the strictest sense of the word. To give an example: the work of the man

who is, perhaps, the greatest caricaturist now living, Caran D'Ache, could never for a moment be mistaken for that of one of his friends. It matters little whether he is translating the humorous side of the life led by

the soldier, the politician, the actor, or even the dog — in each and every case he contrives to present the ludicrous aspect of any given situation in a way that is entirely his own. To his honour be it said, in the majority of cases his sense of humour is aroused by incidents



1.—The Insult: "You have sold your party!"



2.—"Two friends of mine will wait on you to-morrow."



3.—The two friends undertake to carry the challenge.

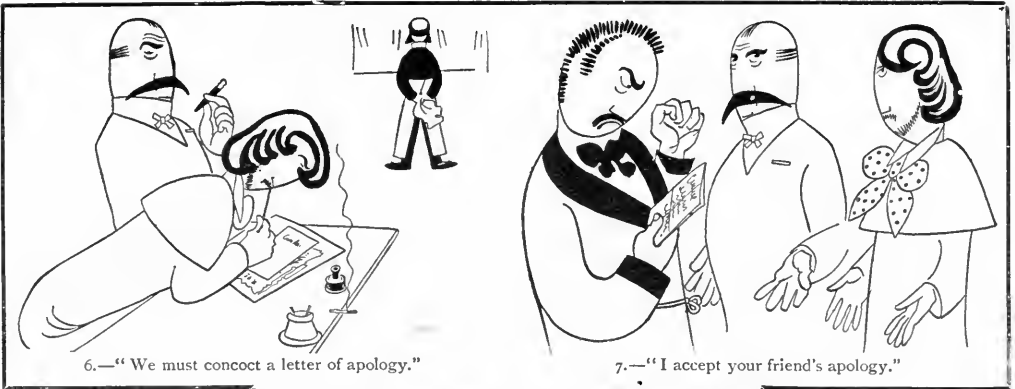


4.—"What is your weapon, Monsieur?"
"The deadliest to be obtained."



5.—"This man means mischief. We had better have a glass of wine and consider what to do."

HOW BEST TO SETTLE A DUEL. BY CARAN D'ACHE.



which furnish innocent and wholesome amusement to people belonging to every age and to both sexes.

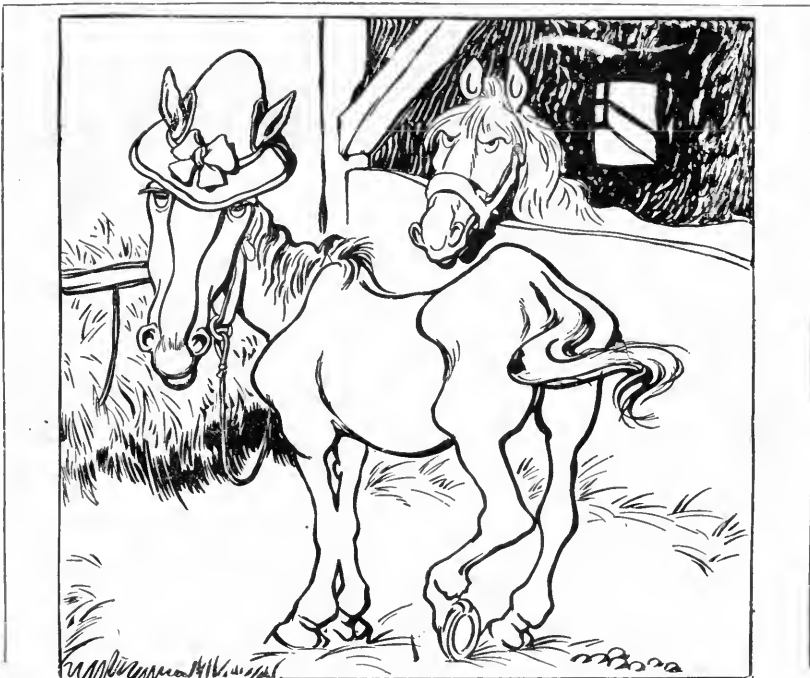
M. Poiré, for his pen-name, Caran D'Ache, is only the Russian for “lead pencil,” really sees life entirely from the humorous standpoint.

His friends complain that even when he is making a serious sketch por-



trait he produces something dangerously like a caricature of his sitter. He is a man of enthusiasms: his hero is Napoleon I, his heroine Marie Antoinette; and his delightful studio contains a wonderful collection of First Empire cartoons

and a complete set of busts and portraits of the last Queen of France. Caran D'Ache



“ My Paris hat makes them all jealous ! ” —BY CARAN D'ACHE.



AT THE DOG-TAILOR'S.—"No, that won't do at all. I don't want my little pet to look like a giddy little actress."—BY H. GERBAULT.

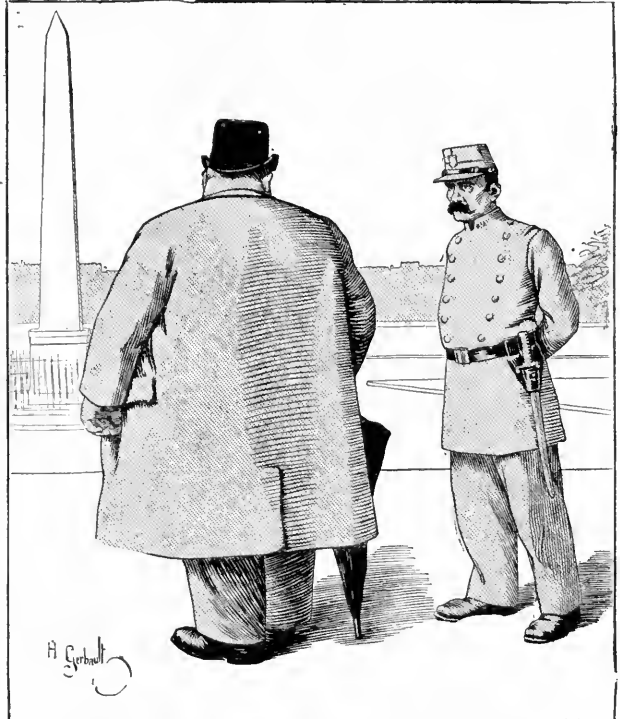
delights in the society of animals; he considers them quite as intelligent and quite as full of fine feeling as are most human beings. A noble dog, for instance, will often inspire him to do a dozen studies under different aspects and from different points of view.

As a rule the French pictorial humorist does not much trouble his head about the animal half of creation. To him the perfect study of mankind is Man, or perhaps one should say Woman; and accordingly the dog or cat which often appears with such excellent effect in the work of M. Gerbault is nearly always seen acting as an accessory to its mistress.

M. Gerbault, though still quite a young man, has attained a foremost place in the more important group of French caricaturists. The son of a well-known states-

man, his parents would naturally have preferred for him a more serious career than that of adding to the gaiety of nations. Even as a child, however, he drew humorous pictures, but it was not until after some years of real hard study that he became a frequent contributor to the French comic papers, and even now he finds time to exhibit work of a very different type from that by which he is most known.

M. Gerbault possesses the true French humour—that which has perhaps its highest exponent in Molière; thus, while quick to seize the absurd side of an incident, he does not seek, as do one or two other artists of his generation, to paint the grotesque and humorously horrible. His work is human and sane in feeling and expression, and he is equally at home in describing the humours of town and country; indeed, some of his most successful cartoons have been done during his holidays and away from Paris.



"Move on here. No crowd permitted!"—BY H. GERBAULT.

M. Abel Faivre is also a two-sided artist; that is to say, he is almost as well known for his portraits and serious work as he is for his grimly mordant cartoon satires. It has always been said that pathos and humour are closely allied; M. Faivre goes a step farther, and declares that the grotesque and the terrible are generally found side by side. A glance at his work makes this more clear than pages of explanation could make it.

The name of M. Albert Guillaume is well known outside France, for he has more than once contributed excellent drawings and caricatures to English and American periodicals, and in 1899 his little exhibition entitled "Bonshommes Guillaume" was one of the big successes of the Gréat Exposition.

M. Guillaume comes of a family of artists, and his sister, Mme. Lami, is almost as well known in France as he is himself; indeed,



AT THE SEASIDE.—*Darby to Joan*: "Cheer up, old woman. You're doing better than last year, and you will be able to swim quite well by the time we celebrate our golden wedding."—BY A. FAIVRE.

Although the French character is supposed to be so remarkably gay and cheerful, there is in France a large public which appreciates the striking and peculiar individual talent of this young artist. "To my eyes," he observes, half apologetically, "the absurd and the horrible walk as it were hand in hand. I see life thus, and I often find that what amuses other people simply seems to me stupid. To me, I can but repeat it, life is either wholly ideal or wholly grotesque." M. Faivre is not yet five-and-thirty; he has been devoted to art from earliest youth, and has studied really hard. He is a painter first, a caricaturist afterwards, but no sketch, however slight, of French humorous art could be considered adequate without some allusion to the very peculiar satirical talent of this young artist.

she may claim to be the only woman caricaturist of our day, though she does not give herself up entirely to humorous work.

M. Guillaume began exhibiting when only seventeen, and then he became a soldier for close on ten years. Even during this long period he remained in touch with his old friends and published some amusing albums, one of his most successful being entitled "Lawn Tennis Throughout the Ages." M. Guillaume is, perhaps, the most hard-working of modern French artists. His fertility is amazing, and he never goes out without bringing back half-a-dozen good ideas for cartoons and posters. At one time he made his studio literally out of a large cellar of his own and his brother's delightful house, which, though situated within a stone's throw of the



THE COUNTRY IN PARIS.—BY GUILLAUME.

Luxembourg Garden, might be a hundred miles from the centre of a great capital. In this curious workroom, lined with valuable tiles, on which were gummed many of his drawings and those of his friends, M. Guillaume worked night and day. Now, to the joy of his family, who did not approve of his thus trying his eyes—for electric light was naturally the only illuminant of this peculiar studio—he has arranged for himself an airy *atelier*, from the windows of which he overlooks the leafy gardens of those Parisians who have the good fortune to dwell in the most picturesque quarter of the town.

Mme. Lami shares her brother's strong sense of humour. She is a delightful and accomplished artist, and during years of her life, when a painter of delicate, miniature-like portraits, it never entered into her mind to turn her pencil to a humorous use. Since her first essay of the kind she has found herself

obliged, almost against her will, to go on with this kind of work, for, as we are all only too well aware, the world asks for nothing better than to be perpetually amused, and Mme. Lami's quaint, humorous studies in femininity have an ever-increasing public.

"As far as is possible," she said to me, "I am inspired by actual facts and incidents, and doubtless that is why I have been so successful. To give you three examples, one of my most successful drawings, that in

which one woman says to another, 'How little I thought I should ever become fond of you! Why, my husband told me you were so very beautiful!' was actually said to me by one of my best friends. Again, another very successful cartoon representing a little boy, just home from the exhibition, Darkest Africa, running up to his mother, who is nursing the baby, with the words, 'Oh, mamma, do let our next baby be a black one,' was taken from life, for the hero of that episode was a little lad well known to me.



PARIS IN THE COUNTRY.—BY GUILLAUME.

Again, the cook who, on hearing her mistress call her any number of hard names, turned round and remarked, coolly : ' Dear me, ma'am, I thought you were talking to yourself,' is also an acquaintance, and a valued one, for she has become quite a domestic type through my drawings.

"From my point of view," she added, "women lend themselves to caricature even more than men do. A woman comes across so many absurd things in her progress through life. I am not often tempted to caricature the men I meet, but I delight in reproducing, if only for my own amusement and that of my brothers, the little humorous incidents which brighten my existence from day to day."

"And do you consider, madam, that the ordinary caricaturist is fair in his delineation of woman?"



THE IDEAL AND THE REAL.—*Lady* (reading): "And when Prince Charming advanced towards the lovely lady of his dreams—" *Housemaid*: "Please, miss, they've come for the washing."—BY MME. LAMI.



MISTRESS AND MAID.—*Lady*: "Now you know what I think of you. No name would be too bad for you." *Cook*: "Dear me, ma'am, I thought you were talking to yourself all this time."

BY MME. LAMI.

"Yes and no. The French humorist is too apt to see the stupid and silly side of the woman whose character he attempts to sum up in a few lines and in a few words. Not often are they as happy as was the humorist who, seeing a young couple enjoying a day on the river, luckily for himself overheard the following remark, made by the lady: 'How lovely this is! If you or I were to die I should retire to the country!' That deserved to be immortalized. But too often the man humorist is never happier than when he finds occasion to turn even a pretty woman into ridicule; he does not like to think that she has intelligence as well as beauty. Again, many people are glad to deny a pretty woman a sense of humour."

But when all is said and done Mme. Lami thoroughly appreciates the admirable work done by her brother and his friends, and she enjoys—as, indeed, what woman would not?—her peculiar position as the only woman caricaturist whose work is constantly published side by side with that done by the masters of her craft.

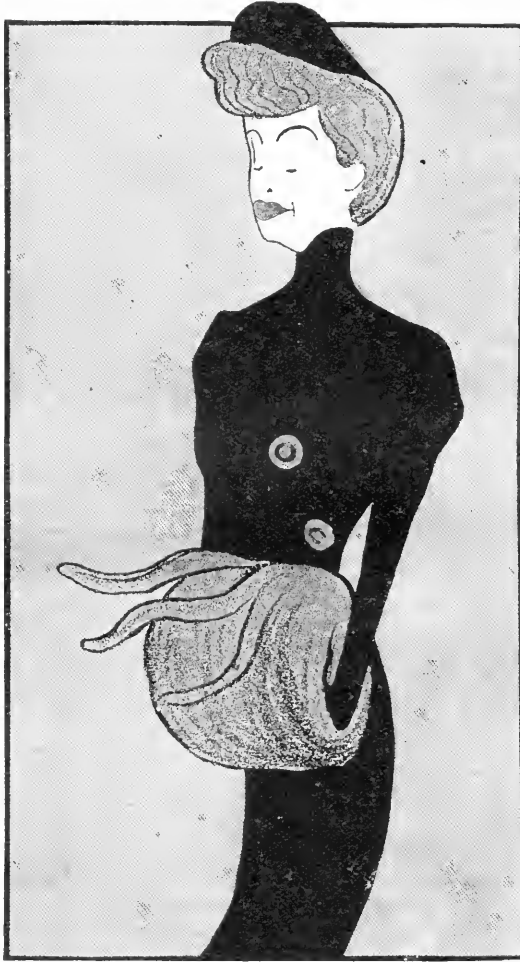
Among the younger artists who may hope to make twentieth century reputations quite as great as those of their predecessors, the Italian caricaturist, Capiello, deserves special mention, for he has struck a really new note, and, though he has only been in Paris three or four years, his cartoons are eagerly asked for and accepted by the leading comic papers.

M. Capiello made his *début* as a designer of pictorial posters, but, even when helping to spread the fame of some light beer or new safety lamp, his sense of humour was always very present, and accordingly he was told to turn his attention to what may be called, although a contradiction in terms, serious caricature. To an English eye his work vaguely recalls, without in any way imitating, the *Vanity Fair* type of cartoon. He seems to possess an instinctive knowledge of the humorous points of any man or woman who becomes, willingly or unknowingly, his sitter for the nonce. This is why his drawings have attracted wide atten-

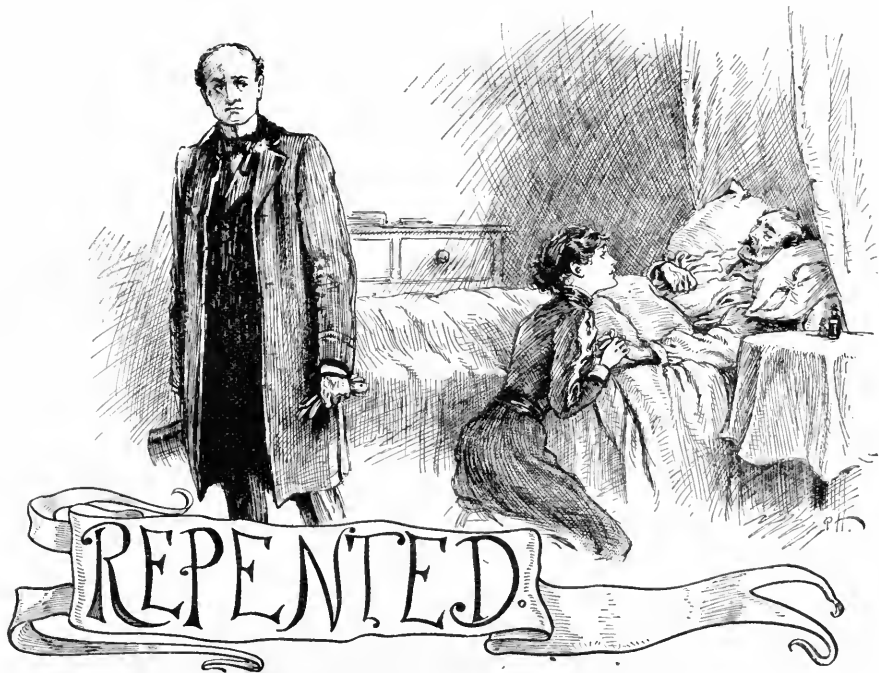
tion among artists. "A little more, and he might become the modern Velasquez," was said of him by a well-known art critic.

One fine morning, not content with the possibilities offered by pen, pencil, and palette, Capiello turned his attention to sculpture, and his humorous statuettes of well-known people made even more sensation than his cartoons and portrait-albums had done. Though only a few inches high, each of these statuettes gives to those who have known or who have often seen the person whom it is supposed to represent a startlingly vivid idea of the young Italian artist's sitter, particularly successful being those done by him of Yvette Guilbert and Jeanne Granier. Indeed, it would appear as if M. Capiello had really achieved, what at this date of the world's history would almost seem to be impossible—namely, a new medium for the interpretation of humorous art!

As yet his fellow-caricaturists have been content to admire his work, and he may be said to have a monopoly of the humorous statuette; but, doubtless, soon his invention, for invention it certainly has been, will be adapted, if not copied, and a new terror will be added to the existence of those whose careers make their faces and figures familiar to the man in the street!



RÉJANE.
BY CAPIELLO.



BY MRS. NEWMAN.

Author of "Her Will and Her Way," "His Vindication," "The Last of the Haddons," etc., etc.

IN the larger of two dreary, barely furnished rooms, in a block of "mansions" situated in the south-east of London, lay a man of about forty-five years of age in the last stage of a long illness. The window-blind was drawn up as it had been left by the doctor when taking his last look at his patient, and the hot glare of the June sunshine streamed in unchecked upon the wan, wasted face of the dying man. The light without could make no difference to him now.

With a grave, pitiful look at the one other inmate of the room—a girl of about eighteen, kneeling by the bedside—the doctor had moved silently away.

"She preferred to be alone with her father just now," he had said to the three or four women who pressed forward on his way downstairs with kindly, if somewhat noisy, sympathy and eager offers of their services. The sympathy they could offer was not of the kind to meet the present case, he was thinking, and the trained, capable nurse he was about to send would be there in less than half an hour.

"Well, the Moores had always been a little stand-offish, keeping to themselves more than was quite neighbourly," agreed the would-be

consolers as they moved off to compare notes upon another and more interesting event just occurring in the "block," as it was generally termed.

The young girl knelt by her father's side in silent prayer, incapable of taking heed of aught besides the terrible fact that the life of the one nearest and dearest to her—the one she loved best in all the world—her father and only friend, was fast ebbing away. In a few hours—it might be moments—she would be alone in the world.

Circumstances had drawn these two more closely together than are the generality of fathers and daughters. Her mother had died when she was an infant, and since then the one object of his life had been to give his child every advantage he could secure for her. She had been kept at good schools, where she had made the most of her opportunities, and supposed her father to be in a good position in life, and that his being immersed in business was the cause of her spending the vacation at school and prevented her seeing much of him. Only when at sixteen she left school and came to his poor home did she realize at what a cost all this had been to her father.

The money spent by Stephen Moore—the name he had chosen to be known by—on his

child's education had been earned by the hardest toil as a law-writer. She knew now that he must have deprived himself of all but the barest necessities in order to give her the advantages she possessed.

Sybil Moore was endowed with something more than quick feeling. She very soon set to work to add her share towards meeting the expenses, and considered herself very fortunate when, by the aid of her late school-mistress, she obtained a morning engagement as reader to an elderly lady, which left her free to assist her father in the after-part of the day. The long years of hard work and self-denial had not been in vain. He knew now that she would at least be able to earn a living after he was gone.

In the last days of his illness the knowledge of this had not been sufficient to satisfy him, his thoughts constantly reverting to the advantages which he told himself ought to be hers. He would lie murmuring in a half-dreamy way of a beautiful park, a stately old home, and a time honoured name, which would be hers but for a great wrong done.

A proud, cold, reticent man, neither asking nor offering sympathy, had appeared Stephen Moore to the outside world. To his daughter he was a delightful companion, with his deep perception, mind stored with knowledge, and heart like that of a child. The reserve which veiled the best in him to the eyes of others she attributed to his having suffered some great wrong in the past, a wrong which he had hitherto shrunk from entering upon, even to her.

His prospects in life, of which his Oxford training and great natural capabilities had seemed to give so much promise, had been ruined. This much she knew, and she could see that during his illness his thoughts reverted to a happy boyhood rather than to the years of trial and difficulty that had come later.

One thing he told her, anxiously endeavouring to impress it upon her mind, and this was that he had chosen to be known by the name of Moore to prevent his real one being known by those he came in contact with.

"Our name is Harland. You will remember, Sybil, Harland."

"Dear father, yes, I will not forget."

"You will find the register of your birth and my marriage to your mother—the dear wife who chose to share my misfortunes. A brave, true woman, who stood unflinchingly by my side until she died. A great wrong—a cruel wrong!"

In silent agony of spirit the young girl laid her cheek upon his hand, to which no caress of hers could impart the slightest warmth. Not her least trial had been the having to listen to his incoherent ramblings about "a great wrong," "a cruel wrong," to which he reverted again and again.

"Is it getting dark? Sybil, where are you?"

"Dear father, I am here; I will not leave you"; her heart stabbed afresh by his unconscionable that his hand was clasped in hers.

"A great wrong! A cruel wrong!"

"Forget it, dear. Think how happy we have been, you and I. Think of your unselfish goodness to me."

"As we forgive them which trespass against us. There must be forgiveness before I go. Do you hear, Sybil, full forgiveness?"

"Yes, father."

His thoughts wandered back to his boyhood again, and he was calling to his brother Wilfred.

"A race down the avenue, Wil. All fair, twelve steps ahead, and off you go! I showed Wilfred where the nest was, sir, so I am most to blame! Your terrier for my pony: that's a good chop for you, old fellow! Did you call, Wil? Are you waiting for me *there*? Sybil! where are you?"

She held a restorative to his lips, and he presently recommenced:—

"You must promise to do it for me, Sybil. Tell Wilfred." The words trailed off into silence again.

"What is it you wish me to tell him, father?" She had not, until now, heard that he had a brother living.

"Go to him—the old home."

"Where?"

"The park, you know—Haresfield—and say——"

"Yes, go to your brother Wilfred and say?"

"As I hope to be forgiven."

"Find your brother and tell him he is forgiven? I will, father."

"Wilfred!" Stephen Harland suddenly opened wide his eyes, as if in surprised recognition, then fell back with a smile on his face—dead!

Ten days later Sybil Harland was on her way to Haresfield, a large estate situated in Berkshire. With the assistance of her father's marriage certificate, in which he was described as the son of Ambrose Harland, Haresfield, Berkshire, she had had no difficulty in ascertaining its whereabouts. The

Harlands were well known in the county, having for generations owned the property distant four miles from the junction.

Hiring a fly she was driven to the park-gates, where she alighted. At the lodge she was told she would most probably find Mr. Harland at the house.

"He is a studious gentleman, and spends a deal of time over his books in the library," said the woman, who came out to answer her inquiries, eyeing the young girl with no little curiosity as she spoke, and wondering why she had asked for the master instead of the mistress.

"She don't look one of their sort, neither, at least her clothes don't," she thought, uncertainly. "After subscriptions or something like that, I take it. But the master don't like 'em to be turned away without a hearing."



"SYBIL WALKED UP THE LONG AVENUE."

Sybil walked up the long avenue, bordered on either side by spreading elms, and slightly ascending the whole way towards a stately house of the Tudor period, in the midst of a well-wooded park, stretching away on all sides.

This, then, was the home of Wilfred

Harland; while his brother had lived in a close back street, wearing his life out with hard work for daily bread. Her eyes dwelt upon the scene, so unfamiliar in its luxury of space and quiet beauty, with bitter resentment of the cruel wrong which had robbed her father of it all, and deprived him of the rights of sonship.

The wrong, whatever it was, must have been relentlessly carried on through long years of suffering to her beloved father! He had been able to forgive, and to wish his dying forgiveness to be given to the brother who had wronged him—but for her! Ah, no, not yet, not here, where everything seemed to mock her with the contrast of her father's lot and that of his brother! The very rooks seemed to caw mockingly to her as they flew in and out the trees.

She could look no longer at the beautiful scene, but walked sternly on with down-cast eyes up the long avenue until she came to the sweep before the house.

She would not even pause to admire the stately old building which under different circumstances would have appealed to her artistic taste; her brows knitted into a frown as she ascended the few broad steps at the entrance.

As she reached the hall-door, thrown hospitably open, a manservant came forward.

"Is Mr. Harland in? Can I see him?"

"Mr. Harland?" he repeated, with a slight interrogatory emphasis; "I will see, ma'am," throwing open a door for her to enter, as he added, "What name, if you please?"

Indicating by a gesture that she preferred waiting there, she replied, "Miss Harland."

Well-trained as he prided himself upon being, the man could hardly avoid showing his surprise. Miss Harland, and unknown there—to him, although he had lived there for years! He opened the door of another room, and she heard the murmur of voices within; then he emerged, and, with a look of bewilderment still on his face, stood aside for her to enter.

Wilfred Harland had pushed back the library chair in which he had been seated, risen to his feet, and stood looking towards the open door with even greater astonishment than the man had shown.

What did he see? A young girl, tall, slender, and, to his eyes, beautiful exceedingly, but with an expression in her face almost repellent in its sternness. She was clothed from head to foot in deep mourning, plain of make and coarse in texture.

"My father, my dear father, died ten days ago. It was his dying wish that I should find you and bring his forgiveness for the great wrong done him."

"I—it is very good of you; but I do not quite understand. That is, I have no brother."

"Your name is Wilfred Harland. Do you repudiate your brother Stephen, now?"

"I think you must be alluding to my father. His name was Wilfred, and he had



"DO YOU REPUDIATE YOUR BROTHER STEPHEN, NOW?"

At loss for words, he could only bow, with an interrogatory look at the refined face, which not even its proud reserve could render unattractive.

"You are Mr. Harland?" she began, as the door closed and he wheeled a chair towards her. "Mr. Wilfred Harland?" taking no notice of his offer of the chair.

"Yes."

"My name is Sybil Harland. I am the only child of your brother Stephen."

He advanced a step, holding out his hand, but still with the same puzzled look in his eyes.

She did not put out her hand to meet his, and went on, with the careful distinctness of one repeating a well-learned lesson:—

a brother Stephen whom he lost sight of for many years."

She looked at him more intently now, and saw that he could not be much more than six or seven and twenty.

"Then it is your father I ought to have seen?"

"He died a year and a half ago."

She fell back, gazing at him in silent dismay. How could she say the words she had meant to say—to him, the dead man's son?

"She does not know the truth," was his swift thought, "and I cannot tell her. No: come what may, I cannot!"

"I am sorry to have intruded upon you," she faltered, pride and reserve giving place

to an expression very like pity in her face. How much worse to be the son of the man who had done the wrong, than for her, she was thinking. To him, she went on:—

"I did not know he was dead, and I was bound to bring my father's message."

He bowed, mentally repeating, "She does not know." At loss what to reply, he somewhat irrelevantly said, "I hope your father did not suffer much in his last illness?"

"He always suffered. He was very poor, and was, until quite lately, obliged to work too hard," she said, striving to steel herself against anything like a friendly feeling towards this man.

"Money was always waiting for him at the bank. It was hoped he knew that."

"If he knew that it was there I am glad to think he did not take it. But since things are as they are, I need say no more than that I have done my father's bidding. I will trespass no longer on your time, Mr. Harland. Good-bye"—turning to quit the room as she spoke.

"You must not—pray do not go, Miss Harland. There are but my sister and myself left, and if you are your father's only child we are the sole representatives of the old house now, and we ought to be friends."

"Thank you; but I am desirous of catching the two o'clock up-train," she replied, still a little stiffly, although she found it as difficult to withstand Wilfred Harland's goodwill as did other people.

A fine young fellow, gifted with brains as well as good looks; one of the few who carry the world with them in their frank, genial fashion.

"Let us try to forget the past, as they who are gone would wish us to do. Would they not wish it if they were present with us now?"

She was silent. Her father had sent his forgiveness, and it was not for her to say or do anything which might invalidate that.

"At least let me introduce my sister to you?" he hurriedly recommenced. "She is living with me, and I shall find her in a few moments."

"There will not be time, I think. I must catch the train," she replied, still endeavouring to keep on the defensive, though she found it increasingly difficult to do so.

"Oh, no, I cannot let you go without seeing my sister. Grace would never forgive me," his admiration deepening as he gazed at her.

She hesitated, returning his gaze a little doubtfully. He seemed kind and desirous

of being friendly; but he had accepted the message she brought in a manner so different from what might have been expected, in the son of the man against whom she had inferentially brought an accusation. Even if he did not know what the charge was any more than did she, it seemed singular that he should show no curiosity as to the meaning of her message. He had looked so strange when she said she had gone there for the purpose of conveying her father's forgiveness, and yet he had passed it over without comment, uttering no word of inquiry or defence.

Taking quick note of her hesitation, he repeated, "Oh, yes, you must see Grace," hurrying out of the room as he spoke.

She looked round at the well-filled bookshelves, remembered what books had been to her father, then, with a bitter sigh, turned towards the open window, only to be reminded of what else he had been deprived. As her eyes dwelt upon the scene without, this side of the house giving upon grass terraces, old Italian garden, trellised roseries, and view of the park beyond, as far as the eye could reach, she thought how great must have been the wrong which had driven her beloved father from a home such as this, which he was so capable of appreciating, to a life of loneliness and poverty, and yet—ah, yes, it would be her happiness by-and-by to remember he had forgiven!

Wilfred Harland re-entered the room accompanied by a young girl of about twenty years of age, not unlike her brother in her frank, kindly bearing, and good-looking in the same genial way. Both were the personification of happiness and fine health, and had a hearty appreciation of the good things that had fallen to their lot.

"Both as easily took in as a couple of children, if you wanted to take 'em in, only you never would," was the verdict upon them by those employed about the estate. "They takes everybody for angels and treats them accordingly, and no one would have the heart to undeceive 'em."

They were nevertheless quite aware of their little weaknesses, and Grace Harland did not mind acknowledging that one of hers was a somewhat extravagant taste for pretty things. She was attired just now with becoming simplicity, although it was simplicity of a much more expensive kind than that of her cousin's.

Sybil Harland owed nothing to carefully-arranged effects of delicately-tinted muslin and soft, innocent-looking lace which a good artiste knows so well how to "create." Her

mourning was of the kind worn by the poorest, with the exception of being unadorned by the cheap glitter they sometimes affect. The refinement of her face and figure was, perhaps, all the more noticeable in contrast with her attire.

"My sister Grace, Miss Harland. The daughter of our father's elder brother, Grace."

"Our cousin! We ought to have known each other long ago, ought we not?" said Grace, with a winning smile, offering her hand as she spoke.

Sybil could not withstand this, although she still strove to retain a cold, reticent bearing.

"Have you told your sister what brought me here, Mr. Harland?"

He reddened and a little awkwardly, as one not accustomed to conceal anything, replied:—

"I had only time to say your father has passed away." A little pleadingly he added: "It did not seem necessary to tell Grace more than that you came to inform me of that."

"I think your sister ought also to know that my errand was to bring my father's dying forgiveness to yours," said Sybil, with quiet distinctness.

"Forgiveness! To my father? How could that be necessary?" not a little indignantly ejaculated Grace, proudly meeting Sybil's eyes. "There must be some mistake, of course. And you forget that our father is also dead, Miss Harland."

"I did not know that he was dead when I came here,

and I was bound to obey my father's dying request. Having done so, I must go, or I shall not catch my train."

"It is four miles. You must not walk. Of course, you will allow us to drive you to the station, and that will give you time to take some refreshment before you go," said Wilfred, looking towards his sister.

Grace remained coldly silent.

"Thank you, but I prefer to walk." And, with a slight bend of the head, by way of farewell, Sybil turned away. She was, in fact, afraid of breaking down altogether if she remained longer there, with the remembrance of her father's touching allusions to his old home crowding upon her memory.

Wilfred opened the door for her, and he and his sister, who was beginning to look more puzzled than angry, walked with her across the hall and out to the sweep before the house.

"Is it quite fair to us your going in this way, when we should be so glad to be friends?" said Wilfred, in a low voice.

"I don't know," she replied. "I do not wish to be unfair, but I cannot forget that I am Stephen Harland's daughter, and I know what he has suffered as none else could."



"WE SHOULD BE SO GLAD TO BE FRIENDS," SAID WILFRED."

"What if——" The young man looked towards his sister, gazing gravely at them, and kept back the words that sprang to his lips.

With a murmured "Good-bye" Sybil walked on.

"What does it all mean, Wilfred? Do *you* know?" asked Grace.

He ruffled up his hair with both hands. "Don't ask me, Grace."

"Why not—what is there I should not know?"

"She came in all good faith to bring her father's forgiveness."

"She said that much herself. But what could our father have done to need forgiveness? He could have been in no way to blame."

"He was not."

"Then, why——"

"It is a miserable story, Grace; and you were not told because father could not bear to talk about it, I suppose. He hoped, I think, to keep the matter quite secret."

"I think I ought to know now, Wilfred."

"Well, perhaps—as things are—yes, I think it is better you should know the truth. The fact is, that when the two brothers were about to leave Oxford, where Stephen had made some mark, a great wrong was done—not by our father, but by hers."

"*Hers!*"

"Yes, and you may imagine what I felt when I was told a Miss Harland wished to see me, and when she said that she had come to bring her father's dying forgiveness to me, thinking she was speaking to my father, unaware that he is dead."

"Oh, Wilfred, what in the world did you say?"

"Simply that my father was dead. It was not possible to tell her that *her* father was the wrong-doer."

"No; how could you? But what was the wrong?"

"Some fraud about the property, I think; but father did not like to hear any allusion to the subject, therefore I never heard the exact story. Enough to say his brother did some great wrong, and had to leave his home in consequence. Better for us not to think of it, Grace. It happened years ago and both are dead. We will let the remembrance of the wrong be buried with them. It is sufficient for us to know that our father was blameless, and for her—the knowledge of the truth might shadow her whole life. Her love for her father is as strong as yours and mine for ours."

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"And she seemed so refined and capable of the best. Ah, Wil, the pity of it! You are right; let her keep her belief in him. It cannot hurt us, knowing what we do. She looks so poor, too. Uncle Stephen was the eldest son, was he not? How was it he was in such bad circumstances?"

"The wrong must have been a very serious one, for grandfather was so indignant that he cut off the entail and left nothing to him; but I know father would gladly have helped him if he could have found him."

"Wilfred, we will not let her slip away from us like this. I will follow her. She cannot know the short cut, and I will go by the road. If you will see that a horse is put to the station-cart I shall overtake her before she gets far."

He caught eagerly at the suggestion. It was just what he himself had been wanting to do; but felt it would come better from her.

"That's good of you!" he ejaculated, going off with quick steps round towards the stable-yard.

Quick as they were to do their master's bidding, Grace Harland, who had merely slipped on a garden-hat, was waiting in the drive when the cart was brought round.

"No; I will go alone," she said, as the groom was about to swing himself up behind.

Seeing it was in her mind that, in the event of there being any confidences between herself and Sybil, she could speak more freely if they were alone, her brother gave the man a nod of dismissal. She indeed required no one. The whole neighbourhood would be ready enough to go to the assistance of Grace Harland, should it be necessary.

She drove rapidly down the avenue and out into the road, and presently saw Sybil walking rather slowly about a quarter of a mile in advance. She was quickly by her side.

"I am driving to the station. Won't you take a seat with me?" she said. "Pray do."

Sybil hesitated, endeavouring to summon pride to her aid, but there was no shade; the road was hot and dusty; and the fatigue and excitement she had passed through, after an insufficient breakfast, were beginning to tell upon her.

"Now that step," said Grace, with the air of taking consent for granted. "Give me your hand. Here you are"; and Sybil found herself by her cousin's side. Seeing that she was looking very white, and apparently at



"SHE WAS QUICKLY BY HER SIDE."

loss what to say, Grace went on: "I am sorry we could not persuade you to take luncheon with us. Are you living with friends?"

"No; I am quite alone now."

"You will not be alone for long, I hope. But after such a loss as yours—I know how it is. We have gone through the same, you know."

"Not quite the same, I think," replied Sybil, her face shadowing again with the thought how few were the comforts she had been able to procure for her father and the contrast between the surroundings of the brothers during their last illness.

"You must allow us to try to be something to you. Wilfred is such a dear, good fellow, and he would be proud to be considered your friend. But you will find all that out later. If you could call me Grace and tell me what your name is we should feel more like cousins to begin with."

"My name is Sybil."

"How pretty; and you are about my age, I think?"

"I am just eighteen."

"Oh, two years younger than I. I am twenty and"—with a blush and a smile—"an engaged young person, if you please."

"One can see it is 'the time of roses' with you."

"That only makes me more desirous of—I have set my heart upon our being friends, you and I."

Sybil had more difficulty in maintaining her reserve now. She could imagine no greater pleasure than having a girl-friend

such as the other seemed to be, but she sternly reminded herself that such pleasure was not for Stephen Harland's daughter. Gravely she replied:—

"Circumstances will prevent that; we shall be going different ways."

"Do you think our fathers would wish that?" glancing with pitiful eyes at the beautiful face by her side, so pathetic in its sadness. "Should we wish it?"

"It is not what one wishes, but what is."

"You do not mean that you could not forgive as did your father when he thought he had been wronged. No, you are not like that, I am sure of it."

"I cannot forget—I never can—the long years of misery and isolation—the deep poverty he endured. He! endowed with a great heart as well as intellect."

"Every effort was made to find him. Poverty he need not have suffered."

"You did not know him," said Sybil, closing her mouth and giving a look at her cousin which was meant to add, "and therefore cannot judge."

Grace drove very slowly; there was but half a mile to go, and she was too much in earnest to be easily rebuffed.

"Will you allow us to do nothing? Remember, it would be hard for us to feel you were alone in the world and would accept neither our love nor our help."

"Had one word of regret for the past reached my father!"

"But suppose for a moment that *your* father had done the wrong, whatever it was, would you not have been sorry for us?"

A hot flush came into Sybil's face. "Pity! Would you have cared for that? Ah, no, you need not tell me," with a bitter smile.

"I suppose we Harlands are proud—that seems part of our heritage; but we ought not to be proud of our pride, Sybil."

"No," quietly. After a few moments' reflection she added, turning hurriedly towards the other as they came within sight of the station: "You are good. I can think of other things besides wrongs, and it will help me by-and-by to remember that you meant to be kind. But it must be good-bye between us."

As Grace drew rein three or four men came running up, each eager to be first to hold the horse's head. Sybil stepped down and Grace sprang to her side. The train was just in sight.

"Will you write to me, Sybil? May I write to you?" persisted Grace, as they made their way to the platform. "What address?"

"Oh, we call our place 'The Mansions,'" replied Sybil, with a little laugh.

"The Mansions?" repeated Grace, questioningly.

"Some call them blocks."

"Where?"

"Oh," as the train began to move off, "Camberwell way."

Grace nodded and smiled. "I shall find you," she said, with a last wave of the hand.

Sybil Harland took up her working life again, not quite so philosophically as she had hoped to do. Her thoughts were, indeed, too often apt to disobey her will, and to dwell upon the beautiful home from which her father had been thrust out by some cruel wrong. She knew how constantly the remembrance of it had been with him during his last illness, and knew that it was chiefly for her sake he had been troubled. Not only he but his child was shut out from the old home. What a home! She pictured to herself the life there, until her heart yearned to roam about those woods she had caught glimpses of, and she dwelt upon the idea of being made free of the old library, until her spirit longed to burst the bonds that fettered it.

Her father had striven to cultivate her mind, perhaps with some hope that she might eventually come to her own, as his share of the property would rightfully be. She saw now that there must have been some lingering hope of this in his mind when he made her promise to go herself to bear his last message to his brother. "Wilfred was

not naturally hard-hearted," he had told himself, "and his heart might be touched by Sybil." She could understand, too, why he had kept her at the different schools during the vacations, and why he had afterwards so carefully guarded her from the associations with which they were surrounded. How often had she been told that she must never forget she had an honoured name to uphold!

"Honoured! Where had been the honour to him?" she asked herself. The doctor, out of his good nature and pity for her, and a poor clerk in the same building, who had now and again helped her father with his work, had been the followers, and she the only mourner at his funeral.

Her fits of abstraction were indulgently borne with for a time by the elderly lady by whom she was employed, as the natural and to be expected effects of her grief for the loss of her father. But, as weeks went by, and she seemed less and less capable of feeling any interest in her work, Mrs. Westall grew a little impatient. She liked to be at least listened to intelligently, and Sybil's replies sometimes showed how far her thoughts had strayed from the subjects introduced.

"You will perhaps find the births, deaths, and marriages more interesting than the leading article appears to be to you this morning, Miss Moore," she a little irritably said one morning, when her patience had been more than usually tried.

Stiffing a sigh Sybil turned over the pages of the paper and began where she generally left off. She had got through the lists of births and marriages, and half-way down the deaths, when she suddenly stopped, catching in her breath with a little gasp.

"On the 3rd, Stephen, eldest son of the late Ambrose Harland, of Haresfield, Berkshire, aged forty-four."

"How did the notice get there?" Ah, her cousins, of course. They must have had it inserted!

The colour came and went in her face as she glanced at Mrs. Westall gazing complacently at her rings.

"Well, child, well?"

Sybil hesitated a moment, then, with the thought that the other could not possibly know, and that it might be better not to attract attention by passing the notice over, ran through the words aloud, and was hurriedly reading on when Mrs. Westall put in:—

"Read that again, Miss Moore."

Sybil obeyed, lowering her voice to almost a whisper.

"Harland? Stephen Harland, of Haresfield? Why, he must have been—of course he was—the missing man! Gone to his last reckoning; a sad one enough for him, I fear, unless he made peace first with those he injured."

"He injured no one!" hotly replied Sybil. "You could not have known him!"

"Indeed I did. We lived in the same county and were neighbours years ago. He brought great trouble on the family."

"It was not he. You must be speaking of his brother," said Sybil, in her agitation showing that she, too, knew something of the family.

Absorbed in the remembrances which the names had called up, Mrs. Westall did not notice the little slip.

"No, it was Stephen, the elder son. His wrong-doing caused some scandal at the

"There! Stephen Harland?"

Sybil had risen to her feet and was gathering up her belongings.

"It is not much past eleven, Miss Moore."

"I must go, Mrs. Westall."

"Go?"

"Stephen Harland was my beloved father, and, knowing as I do that he was sinned against instead of sinning, I cannot stay here another hour, since you so misjudge him."

"Your father! My poor child; how was I to know that? You gave the name of Moore."

"It is Harland. My father did not wish to be known by his own name until the wrong done to him was righted. It never was righted. I took his dying forgiveness to—the one who was to blame. But I was too late; he, too, was dead. It was to do this, and to see to the arrangements for the



"IT IS NOT TRUE!"

time, and he had to leave his home in consequence. Afterwards the entail was cut off and he was not mentioned in his father's will. I know that much, although I never heard precisely what his wrong-doing was. Some fraud with regard to the property, it was said, but the family were glad to hush the matter up as time went on."

"It is not true! The wrong was not done by him!" repeating, as she saw the surprise in Mrs. Westall's face, "It is not true!"

"How do you know that it is not, Miss Moore?" looking more curiously than angrily at the proud, pale young face—proud and so sad.

"I do know it. He died in the place where I live."

funeral, that I asked you to give me a week at home. I could, then, only tell you that my father was dead. Now, I must go."

"Why should you? You suit me very well, when"—with a half smile at the remembrance of certain little episodes of girlish enthusiasm and romance—"you keep to the business in hand. Since you desire to earn money you could not, I think, do that anywhere more easily than here."

"You believe my father was guilty, and I could not stay with anyone who thought that. No, not to earn a fortune!"

"In that case I fear you are—well, well, we will say inexperienced, and you will find it difficult to select your employers. But there need be no offence. When you have

gained a little more knowledge of the world and its ways, come to me again. On my side, I will make no further allusions to unpleasant subjects, and I certainly should not consider anyone answerable for what a father might or might not have done. Meantime, I will send you a cheque for what is due, and should you determine not to return to me, I will say all that I ought to say in your favour to anyone you may refer to me. I have nothing but good to say of you during the two years you have been coming here."

"That is kind. I shall always thank you for that! Good-bye, Mrs. Westall."

"Good-bye, my dear," said Mrs. Westall, her eyes following the young girl as she went, with kindly anxiety.

"To throw up eight-and-twenty shillings a week, which she frankly admitted to be liberal payment, for such sentimental reasons!" thought Mrs. Westall, who prided herself upon her worldly wisdom. "But she is not stupid, and will, no doubt, soon find that it is more than foolish to quarrel with her bread and butter, because I did not know Stephen Harland was her father. That is all it amounts to, and the sooner she makes up her mind to come back to me the better for both of us. My heart goes out to the child, and I could not endure to lose sight of her, leal and true as she is. Yes; it does one good to find that poor human nature is not so bad after all as we sometimes give it the credit for being. You, at least, have not been apt to overestimate its capabilities, I fear, Jane Westall."

Three or four weeks had passed. Sybil was already beginning to realize that there are not many Mrs. Westalls in the world in the matter of liberality. If she succeeded in procuring an engagement she knew now that reading a few hours a day to an invalid does not command more than very moderate pay-

ment in the market, hardly sufficient for the barest livelihood.

She had given up one room, and narrowed her expenses to the lowest limit; but she knew that even this could not last long. In a very short time she would be penniless, unless she could find some employment. She could not go to the school-mistress who had recommended her to Mrs. Westall without explaining why she had left, and to return to the latter was not to be thought of.

Sybil had returned home one afternoon, tired by a round of fruitless visits to agents,

and was anxiously counting her small and rapidly diminishing capital. Gazing in a depressed way at the small heaps of shillings and pence, she was speculating as to how many lessons on the piano she could contrive to give during the day at threepence an hour—a suggestion thrown out by the kindly little clerk, himself somewhat in straits—when suddenly came the crisis.

There was a tap at the door, and after a moment it was opened, and to her great astonishment Grace Harland looked in. Behind her stood her brother, and both were looking very grave and unlike themselves as Sybil had last seen them.

"May we come in?"

"Yes, of course"; rising and looking at them in a half-dazed way. What had brought them?

They entered, closing the door, but did not advance or offer to shake hands; regarding her in a way that puzzled her still more.

"How did you find this place?" she asked, not knowing what to say.

"You said the 'Mansions,' Camberwell way, and we went from one place to the other, until we came to this. We had to find you," said Grace.

"It was necessary we should," added Wilfred. "In justice to the dead."



"SYBIL WAS ANXIOUSLY COUNTING HER SMALL AND RAPIDLY DIMINISHING CAPITAL."

"Your dead or mine?" Sybil was asking herself, gazing silently at them.

"Something occurred to render it necessary," he said.

"What?" asked Sybil, shrinking back with a terrible fear of what she might hear, unconsciously speaking a little abruptly, with the thought that it might be a repetition of Mrs. Westall's story, and the more inclined to be on the defensive.

"My brother has a disclosure to make—a very painful one," said Grace. Taking note of Sybil's increased pallor and the defiant way with which she drew back her head and met their eyes, pressing her hand to her side, she added, "For us, it is a very painful one."

"For you?" glancing from one to the other. "I do not understand."

Wilfred Harland reddened, the veins in his temples standing out like cords as he strove with himself; but he contrived to reply, in a quiet tone:—

"You will when I have explained, which I will try to do in as few words as possible. A few days ago my sister and I were talking over your visit to us."

"When had he ceased talking about Sybil?" thought Grace, with a sad little half smile.

"And endeavouring to hit upon some plan to prevent our losing sight of you, when suddenly some words of my father's, spoken during his last illness, forced themselves upon my remembrance. At the time I thought it was the wandering of a brain weakened by illness; but, on thinking it over again, it seemed to me possible the words might have some significance. He said something about having written a letter for my private reading after he was gone, and tried to tell me where I should find it, but failed. I searched through his papers more carefully than I had before done, and, at length, found a letter carefully sealed and addressed to me, to be read after his death.

"This is it," taking a letter from an inner pocket of his coat and offering it to her. "I can only ask you to read it, and spare him as much as you can."

"My father! Do you think it necessary to ask me that?"

"Hush! You do not know."

"My dear son!"—she whitened to the lips, ejaculating with the dread of what she might find: "It is for you. No: I cannot read it. Tell me as shortly as you can. I see you are sorry for me, and I am not too proud now to thank you for that. Only"—with a

little sob in her voice—"I will not believe—you must understand that nothing will kill my love for him—nothing."

"She does not see," said Grace, tears streaming down her pale cheeks, but, as Sybil was quick to notice, drawing no nearer to her; neither brother nor sister had, indeed, made any friendly overtures since their entrance. "Oh, Wilfred, you must tell her!"

"Then I must begin by saying I know now that the message of forgiveness you brought from your father to mine came from an innocent man to—a guilty one."

"You know that my father was innocent?" said Sybil, in a low, broken voice. "You came to tell me that?"

"Yes. My poor father! God help me; I can only hope what he suffered may plead for him. He *did* suffer, and his last illness was a consequence of long years of remorse. He would have given the world to undo the past, but it was not to be. I know that he did all he could to find his brother, advertising constantly, and using all the means that could be devised. I know, too, how desirous he was to restore the property, of which your father had been dispossessed, and a large sum was always kept at the bank to his credit. He could only suppose, as years went on, that his brother was dead. Believing this, and that the exposure would do his brother no good, while it would bring suffering upon his own children—he did not know his brother had married and had left a child—he shrank from revealing the true facts. How can I tell you the miserable story?"

"Do not. You have told me enough in exonerating my father," said Sybil, in the largeness of her heart feeling a deep pity for the son upon whom such a task was imposed.

"Cost what it may, it is for me to right the wrong, so far as lies in my power. It is the only reparation I can make, and you must be told the whole truth. My father became involved in difficulties at Oxford, and, my grandfather being a hard man, he went to the Jews. As the younger son he had some difficulty in getting the money he wanted, and persuaded his brother Stephen to be surety for him—ah, no, you must hear the worst," as Sybil was about to speak. "Uncle Stephen was just then immersed in study, and trusting to—to his brother, signed papers for a much larger amount than he imagined. The transaction came to their father's ears, and he believed that the elder brother had drawn the younger into

difficulties. There was a stormy scene with his elder son, in which he was taunted with having tried to ruin his brother. Stephen would say nothing in his own defence, and his father would not forgive. My father was away from home on a three months' tour at the time, or I believe right would have been done. Grandfather cut off the entail and left all he possessed to his younger son. Uncle Stephen would not betray his brother, and left his home for ever. Grandfather died soon after, and it was then too late to

known to the world, although I have not yet been able to—to—I can only leave the rest to you. You have the right to have the whole truth made public."

"There is no need to make anything more than my father's innocence known. The rest does not concern the world; and, for us we will let bygones be bygones," holding out a hand to each as she spoke.

"And you will come home and take what is rightly yours?"

"Home!" the word brought the soft flush



"WE WILL LET BYGONES BE BYGONES."

right the wrong as my father meant to do, for uncle could not be found. He never forgave himself."

"My father forgave him, thank God, and—you must not think—Life was difficult for him, but not so hard as it may have seemed. He was working for me—we had each other—and we had our compensations."

"You can speak in that way—to us?" said Grace, in a broken voice.

They were both gazing at her in the greatest astonishment. Was this the girl they had so much dreaded to meet?

"One word," huskily put in Wilfred. "I have taken steps to make your father's innocence of the charges brought against him

of pleasure to her cheeks and a smile to her eyes. "That would indeed be coming into a fortune!"

"It is a large one," said Wilfred, meaningly.

"Ah, now you are speaking of money. We will rather think of the two who are gone, and let the word 'forgiven' put a seal to the past. Everything else will come right—Wilfred!"

He raised his head, for the first time standing at his full height, and looked at her, a wonderful light coming into her eyes.

His sister caught the look, and told herself that everything *would* come right, and in the best possible way.

For Luck!

A CURIOUS COLLECTION OF GAMBLERS' MASCOTS.

BY LEWIS PERRY.



It has been the writer's lot, during many years of journalistic wanderings, to gaze upon a number of collections of curiosities, some beautiful, some weird, some gruesome. Several of these have cropped up in all sorts of unexpected places, where the ordinary citizen would never dream of looking for them. And all have been in the possession of enthusiasts, whose varied tastes in selecting a particular subject to which to devote time and earnest attention are worthy of the reflections of sage or cynic. Only a week or two ago, by a mere accident, I came across what I might term a unique little lot of genuine curiosities, inasmuch as the originality of the subject cannot be disputed. For where can the second collection of gamblers' mascots be found? I should like to know.

In one of the most picturesque hotels in the beautiful Isle of Wight a guest, as a special favour, may be invited to look upon some very curious charms, which have been carried about by a number of the most successful visitors to the gambling palaces of the Continent.

This collection is the property of a once well-known and now retired cross-Channel captain, a typical seafaring, tempest-tossed worthy, whose good-humoured features and hearty laugh are calculated to make the most morose of his guests begin to look out for the better side of life.

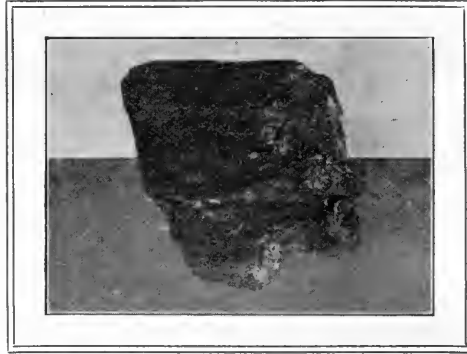
Sojourning for a little rest in Shanklin, I happened to hear of the captain's quaint collection, and in the interests of the readers of this Magazine I soon discovered its whereabouts. It certainly proved worth the trouble of tracking. Besides being unique as a

collection, the items on view suffice to throw a strong side-light on the curious superstitious notions of the confirmed gambler.

During the captain's cross-Channel paddling many thousands of visitors to Continental gambling-tables came under his charge. Were this the place for such items I could reproduce many remarkable incidents of the gambling world now stored away in the capacious memory-box of the man who talked with winners and losers alike. But I must keep to my subject, for to every article in the captain's collection of mascots is attached a little history sufficient to fill any space at my disposal in these columns.

Take, for instance, the piece of common coal which is illustrated on this page. There is nothing extraordinary in its appearance; but the gambler to whom it once belonged would not, at one period of his life, have parted with it for a big sum of money. And for a very good reason. A regular visitor to Monte Carlo, infatuated with the gambler's passion,

he had found luck entirely against him. He lost, and lost again and again, but his passion increased with his losses, and after several visits he was all but ruined. One evening, whilst wandering, morose and despairing, along the quay, even contemplating suicide, he passed a barge from which some coal was being unloaded. As he walked under the swinging crane a little bit of the shiny mineral fell from the carrying bucket and landed—in the gambler's coat-pocket! As superstitious as most gamblers are, he concluded it was a lucky omen, and hastened away to raise a little money for the night that was either to save or ruin him. Next morning he left the tables with over 30,000 francs in his

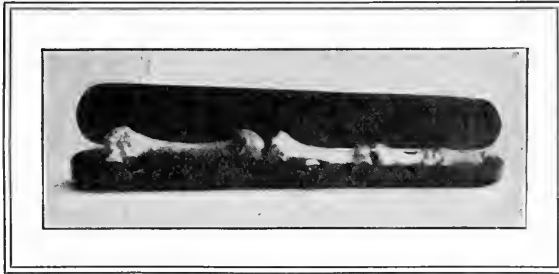


THE LUCKY PIECE OF COAL.

possession—his night's winnings. From that time his luck turned—he never left the tables except as a winner, sometimes of a small sum, more often the amount was considerable and occasionally huge. He never failed to carry his lucky bit of coal about with him, stowed away in a secure corner of his safest pocket. That man is now immensely wealthy, with an estate in Scotland. Returning from France eleven years ago, determined to be satisfied with his earnings and to settle down at home as a country gentleman, on saying "good-bye" to the captain who had safely piloted him so many times across the Channel he presented him with a handsome cheque and his wonderful mascot, told him the story of his luck, and bade him go and win a fortune. The worthy captain accepted the presents with thanks, but, not having been born with the gambling instinct, he simply introduced the mascot to his collection of curiosities, where it remains to this day.

A somewhat gruesome little item in the mascot collection are the right forefinger bones of a man who was the seventh son of a seventh son. This, strangely enough, was carried by a well-known theatrical lady in the form of a brooch when she visited the tables at Monte Carlo or Aix-les-Bains, and she asserted that it always brought her luck. But one night, as she stretched across the table to rake in her winnings, the ornament fell from her throat, and, striking the edge of the table, broke at the knuckle. She had it immediately repaired, but, according to her story, the charm had departed from it, and

she was so unlucky as to lose all her money in a few days. Then, having to return to England, whilst crossing the Channel on her way home she presented the charmless mascot to the captain as a contribution to his collection of similar curiosities.

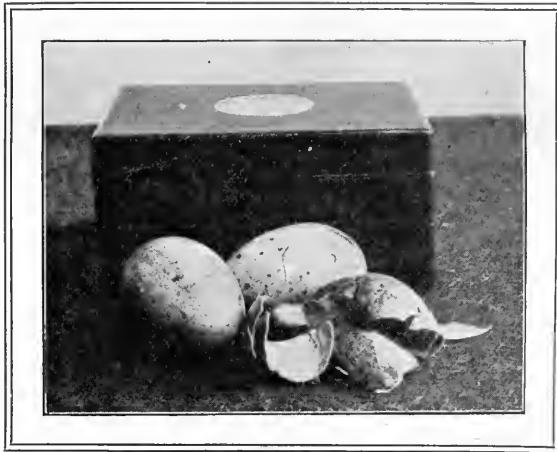


THE RIGHT FOREFINGER BONES OF THE SEVENTH SON OF A SEVENTH SON.

There is an ancient gambling superstition which holds in the highest value the possession of three raven's eggs—necessarily the first three of a young bird.

Many gamblers carry such a mascot, so it is not surprising to find one amongst the captain's collection. To this one, however, a tragic history is attached. The former owner had frequently boasted of his luck in the cafés, attributing his good fortune to the possession of the mascot, which he would exhibit for the admiration of the bystanders. He carried the eggs in a well-padded gold case of great value, and was most particular lest those who inspected it should crush the

contents, for the superstition runs that luck departs immediately when even one egg is broken. One night the owner was not at his accustomed place for *rouge-et-noir*. He was missed from his hotel next morning, and on search being made his dead body was found bruised and beaten almost out of recognition. The mascot was missing; but it was anything of



THE THREE RAVEN'S EGGS WHICH LED TO A MURDER.

a mascot to the murderer, for through it he was traced, arrested, and condemned. The case was locked when recovered from the murderer, and on being opened one of the eggs was found to be broken. The mascot came into the possession of an English detective to hand over with other things to the murdered man's



THE CLERGYMAN'S CHINESE COIN.

relatives. The captain having expressed a wish for the eggs, the detective conveyed his message to the legal owners, who very graciously sent them to the collector.

About ten years ago there was a certain English clergyman who occasionally "did a flutter" at Aix-les-Bains, and was usually in the best of luck.

Unfortunately for the said cleric, people

haste. The poor clergyman, you may be sure, did not wear his usual winning smile when he read it. He at once set out homewards, determined to give up for ever his nightly search for healthy excitement—and hard cash. On his way across from Havre he confided the secret of his gold-winning success to our worthy friend the captain, handing him over, at the same time, the ministerial "mascot"—a very old and very large Chinese coin—to be added to the collection.

One of the most quaintly curious of mascots is that one formed of three little silk bags (whose colour was once white) filled with salt, and suspended on a finely-plaited catgut cord. This extraordinary "charm" was worn around the neck and next to the



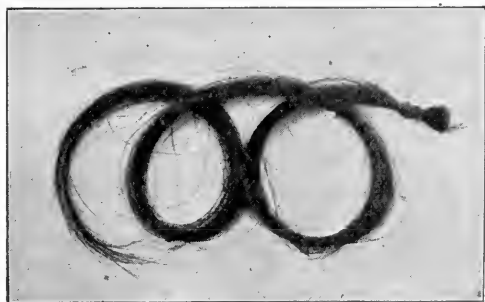
THE LADY'S THUMB-RING WHICH BROUGHT WEALTH.



THE THREE SALT BAGS WHOSE OWNER WON A FORTUNE.

skin of the gambler whose particular fancy selected it as an aid to the fortunes of the tables. The former wearer was a Spaniard residing in England, who never failed to visit regularly one or other of the Continental towns where play is *the* thing. For many years, however, he has retired to his native land rich enough to assume a position of importance amongst his countrymen.

An oddly-shaped thumb-ring is also included in the collection. It was once the mascot worn by a very young and charming lady, who, it is said, brought back wealth to



THE "GOLDEN HAIR MASCOT."

were apt to talk of such doings when they returned to England. A communication from his superior was dispatched in hot

an impoverished estate, but died shortly afterwards, her constitution having been ruined through over-excitement and late hours.

Readers with retentive memories for such things will scarcely need to be reminded of the sensation caused some seventeen or eighteen years ago at Monte Carlo when a beautiful lady of good family plunged to such an extent, and so successfully, that she came as near as may be to bringing about that little event known as "breaking the bank." She was accounted so lucky by her gambling friends that it became quite a usual thing for an application to be made by one of her hundreds of friends for a lock of her hair as a mascot. Her beautiful golden tresses must have suffered severely, so numerous were the mascots of this particular brand. Some indeed whispered that, for the sake of her personal appearance and the retention of the good-will of her friends, the stock of a well-known Nice wig-maker was called upon pretty frequently. Be that as it may, the luck of the holders of the "golden hair mascot" was not always remarkable. Several who carried them and won large sums of course put their good fortune down to the mysterious influence of the mascot. Those who became broke themselves had another opinion to vouchsafe on the subject. The lock of hair which through the art of photography we are enabled to reproduce in these pages was carried by an elderly relative of the lucky lady, and proved a mascot

to him inasmuch that, although he did not make an enormous fortune, he succeeded in closing a two months' battle with the

bankers with the loss of only a few francs. Which is good luck of a sort!

A piece of common boot-leather cut in the shape of a horseshoe would not seem at first glance likely to make a remunerative claim on the attentions of good fortune. But as this particular mascot at one time formed portion of a shoe worn by a poor woman who tramped eighty-nine miles in three days on the Lourdes pilgrimage, its worth as a luck-giver may not appear so trivial. At any rate, it and a prominent representative of

English law and order were at one time inseparable companions during the Long Vacation. It is many years, however, since this mascot was added, by consent of the owner, to the collection.

There are several more knick-knacks included in the captain's interesting little museum, amongst others being a one-pie piece, value about the tenth of a penny, but which the former owner once declined to part with for one thousand francs! Poor fellow, he placed too much trust in that mascot, plunged, and never rose again!

Another coin mascot is an English halfpenny set with diamonds and other precious stones. The lady who carried it, after a run of unaccountable bad luck, sold the "lucky" trifle to find money to go on with, and lost every franc of the price within ten minutes of the sale.



THE HORSESHOE MADE FROM THE BOOT OF A LOURDES PILGRIM.



A ONE-PIE PIECE—A MAS-COT WHICH FAILED.



A HALFPENNY SET WITH JEWELS.

THE HOUSE UNDER THE SEA



CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH JASPER BEGG MAKES KNOWN THE PURPOSE OF HIS VOYAGE TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN, AND HOW IT CAME ABOUT THAT HE COMMISSIONED THE STEAMSHIP "SOUTHERN CROSS" THROUGH PHILIPS, WESTBURY, AND CO.



ANY gentlemen have asked me to write the story of Ken's Island, and in so far as my ability goes, that I will now do. A plain seaman by profession, one who has had no more education than a Kentish grammar school can give him, I, Jasper Begg, find it very hard to bring to other people's eyes the wonderful things I have seen, or to make all this great matter clear as it should be clear for a right understanding. But what I know of it I will here set down; and I do not doubt that the newspapers and the writers will do the rest.

Now, it was upon the third day of May in the year 1899, at six bells in the first dog-watch, that Harry Doe, our boatswain, first sighted land upon our port bow, and so made known to me that our voyage was done. We were fifty-three days out from Southampton then; and for fifty-three days not a man among the crew of the *Southern Cross* had known our

destination, or why his skipper, Jasper Begg, had shipped him to sail for the Pacific Ocean. A pleasure voyage, the most part said; remembering that I had been in and out of private yachts ever since I ran away from school and booked with Skipper Higg, who sailed Lord Kanton's schooner from the Solent; but others asked themselves what pleasure took a yacht's skipper beyond the Suez, and how it came about that a poor man like Jasper Begg found the money to commission a 500-ton tramp through Philips, Westbury, and Co., and to deal liberally with any shipmate who had a fancy for the trip. These questions I meant to answer in my own time. A hint here and there of a lady in whose interest the voyage was undertaken kept the crew quiet, if it did not please its curiosity. Mister Jacob, my first officer, and Peter Bligh (who came to me because he said I was the only man who kept him away from the drink) guessed something if they knew nothing. They had both served under me in Ruth Bellenden's yacht; neither had forgotten that Ruth Bellenden's husband sailed eastward for the wedding trip. If they put their heads together and said that Ruth Bellenden's affairs and the steam-ship *Southern Cross* were not to be far apart at the end of it, I don't blame them. It was my business to hold my tongue until the

land was sighted, and so much I did for Ruth Bellenden's sake.

Well, it was the third day of May, at six bells in the first dog-watch, when Harry Doe, the boatswain, sighted land on the port bow, and came abaft with the other hands to hear what I had got to say to him. Mr. Jacob was in his bunk then, he being about to take the first watch, and Peter Bligh, who walked the bridge, had rung down for half-speed by the time I came out with my glass for the first view of the distant island. We were then, I must tell you, in longitude 150 east of Greenwich, by about 30 north; and my first thought was that we might have sighted the Ganges group, like many a ship sailing from 'Frisco to Japan; but when I had looked at the land a little while, and especially at a low spur of rocks to the northward, I knew that this was truly the Ken Archipelago, and that our voyage was done.

"Lads," I said, "yonder is your port. Good weather and good luck, and we'll put about for home before three days have passed."

Now, they set up a great cheer at this; and Peter Bligh, whose years go to fat, wiped his brow like a man who has got rid of a great load and is very pleased to have done with it.

"Thank you for that," said he. "I hope I do my duty in all weathers, Mr. Begg, but this sunshine do wear a man sadly. Will you stop her, sir, or shall we go dead slow?"

"Dead slow, if you please, Mister Bligh," said I; "the chart gives seventeen thousand fathoms about the reef. We should have water enough, and water is a good thing, as I believe you know."

"When there's nothing else I can manage to make shift with it—and feel a better man, sir," he added, as an after-thought. But I was already busy with my glass and that was not the hour for light talk. Yonder upon the port bow a group of islands shaped on our horizon as shadows upon a glassy sea. I could espy a considerable cliff-land rising to the southward, and north of that the rocky spur of which I have made mention. The sun was setting behind us in a sky of orange and crimson, and it was wonderful to see the playful lights now giving veins of gold to the dark mass of the higher rocks, or washing over the shadows as a running water of flame. I have seen many beautiful sights upon the sea, in calm or tempest, God's weather or the devil's; but I shall never forget that sunset which brought me to Ken's Island on as strange an errand

as ever commissioned a ship. The deep blue of the sky, the vastness of the horizon, the setting sun, the island's shaping out of the deep: these, and the curiosity which kept the glass ever at my eye, made an hour which a man might fear to tell of. True, I have sighted many a strange land in my time and have put up my glass for many an unknown shore; but yonder lay the home of Ruth Bellenden, and to-morrow's sun would tell me how it fared with her. I had sailed from England to learn as much.

Now, Mr. Jacob, the first officer, had come up to the bridge while I was searching the shore for an anchorage, and he, who always was a prudent man, spoke up at once for laying to and leaving our business, whatever it was, until the morning.

"You'll lose the light in ten minutes, and yon's a port I do not like the look of," said he. "Better go about, sir. Reefs don't get out of the way, even for a lady."

"Mister Jacob," said I, for, little man that he was, he had a big wit in his own way, "the lady would be very glad to get out of the way of the reef, I'm thinking. However, that's for the morning. Here's Peter Bligh as pleased as any school-boy at the sight of land. Tell him that he isn't going ashore to-night, and he'll thank you nicely. Eh, Peter, are you, too, of Jacob's mind? Is it sea or shore, a glass in my cabin or what the natives will sell you in the log-cabins over yonder?"

Peter Bligh shut up his glass with a snap.

"I know the liquor, Mr. Begg," said he; "as God is good to me, I'm of Mister Jacob's way of thinking. A sound bed and a clear head, and a fair wind for the morning—you'll see little of any woman, black or white, on yonder rock to-night."

Jacob—his little eyes twinkling, as they always did at his own jokes—muttered the old proverb about choosing a wife by candle-light; but before anyone could hear him a beacon shone out across the sea from some reef behind the main island I had noticed, and all eyes were turned anxiously to that. It was a queer place, truly, to set up a light, and I don't wonder that the men remarked it.

"An odd kind of a lantern to help poor mariners," said Mister Jacob, sagely. "Being kind to it, sir, I should say that it's not more than a mile too much to the northward."

"Lay your course by that, and a miracle won't carry you by the reef," added Peter Bligh, sagaciously; "in my country, which is partly Ireland, sir, we put up notice-boards

for the boys that ride bicycles : ' This Hill is Dangerous.' Faith, in ould Oireland they put 'em up at the bottom of the hills, which is useful entirely."

Some of the crew, grouped about the ladder's foot, laughed at this ; others began to mutter among themselves as though the beacon troubled them, and they did not like it. A seaman's the most superstitious creature that walks the earth or sails on the sea, as all the world knows. I could see the curiosity, which had followed my men from Southampton, was coming to a head here about twelve thousand miles from home.

"Lads," cried I, quick to take the point up, "Mister Bligh says that an Irishman built yon light, and he knows, being a bit of a one himself. We're not going in by it, anyway, so you can ask questions to-morrow. There's a hundred pounds to be divided among you for your good behaviour outward, and there'll be another hundred when we make Calshot Light. To-night we'll find good sea-room, and leave their beacon to the lumber-heads that put it up. I thank you, lads, for honest work in an honest ship. Ask the purser for an extra tot of grog, and say the skipper told you to."

They gave a hearty "Aye, aye, sir," to this, and without more ado we put the ship about and went dead slow against a stiff tide setting east by north-east. For my part, I reckoned this the time to tell my officers what my intentions were, and when I had called them into the cabin, leaving our "fourth"—a mere lad, but a good one—upon the bridge, I ordered Joe, the steward, to set the decanters upon the table. Mister Jacob, as usual, put on his glasses (which he always did in room or cabin, just as though he would read a book), but Peter Bligh sat with his cap between his knees and as foolish an expression upon his face as I have ever seen.

"Now, gentlemen," I said, "no good talking in this world was ever done upon a dusty table, so we'll have a glass round and then to business. Peter Bligh, I'm sure, will make no objection to that."

"Faith, and I know when to obey my superior officer, captain. A glass round, and after that——"

"Peter, Peter," said I, "'tis the 'after that' which sends many a good hulk to the bottom."

"Not meaning to apply the term to Peter Bligh, but by way of what the landmen call 'silime,'" said Mister Jacob.

"'Simile' you mean, Mister Jacob. Well,

it's all the same, and neither here nor there in the matter of a letter. The fact is, gentlemen, I wish you to know why I have sailed this ship to Ken's Archipelago, and under what circumstances I shall sail her home again."

They pricked up their ears at this, Peter turning his cap nervously in his hands and Mister Jacob being busy with his glasses as he loves to be.

"Yes," I went on, "you have behaved like true shipmates and spoken never a word which a man might not fairly speak. And now it's my duty to be open with you. Well, to cut it short, my lads, I've sailed to the Pacific because my mistress, Ruth Bellenden, asked me."

They had known as much, I imagine, from the start ; but while Mister Jacob pretended to be very much surprised, honest Peter raised his glass and drank to Mistress Ruth's good health.

"God bless her," he said, "and may the day come when I ship along o' such a one again. Aye, you would have come out for her sake, captain—no other, I'm sure !"

"She being Ruth Bellenden no longer, but the wife of a gentleman with a name none but a foreigner can spell," added Mister Jacob ; and then he went on, "Well, you surprise me very much, captain—very much indeed. Matrimony is a choppy sea and queer things swim in it. But this—this I had not looked to hear."

I knew that this was only Mister Jacob's way, and continued my story.

"It was a promise to her upon her wedding day. Ten thousand pounds she left with her lawyers for this very purpose. 'My husband has strange ideas ; I may not share them,' were her words to me. 'If his yacht should not be at the islands when I wish to visit Europe again, I should like you to find me a vessel in its place. I trust you, Jasper Begg,' she said ; 'you will sail for Ken's Archipelago twelve months from to-day, and you will come to my house there, as you used to do in the old time, for orders. Perhaps I shall send you home again, perhaps I may like to have a yacht of my own once more. Who knows ? I am quite alone in the world,' she said, laughing, 'though my brother is alive. And the Pacific Ocean is a long way from London—oh, such a long way,' she said, or something of that sort."

"Aye, and right, too. A derved long way she meant, I don't doubt, if what was in her mind came out"—puts in Peter at this.

"Peter," said I, "be pleased to hold your

tongue until your opinion is asked. What I am telling you is a confidence which you two, and no others, share with me. To-morrow, as soon as daylight, I shall row ashore and ask to see Mme. Czerny, as I suppose I must call little Ruth now. If she says, 'Go home again,' very well, home we go with good wages in our pockets. If she says 'Stay,' there's not a man on board this ship that will not stay willingly—she being married to a foreigner, which all the world knows is not the same as being married to an Englishman——"

"To say nothing of an Irishman," said Peter Bligh, whose mother was from Dublin and whose father was named sometimes for a man of Rotherhithe and at other times put down to any country which it suited Peter to boast about.

"Edmond Czerny was a Hungarian," said I, "and he played the fiddle wonderful. What mad idea took him for a honeymoon to Ken's Island, the Lord only knows. They say he was many years in America. I know nothing about him, save that he had a civil tongue and manners to catch a young girl's fancy. She was only twenty-two when she married him, Mister Jacob."

"Old enough to know better—quite old enough to know better. Not that I would say anything against Ruth Bellen-den, not a word. It's the woman's part to play the capers, sir, and we poor mortal men to be took by them. Howsom-ever, since there was a fiddle in it, I've nothing more to say."

We laughed at Mister Jacob's notion, and Peter Bligh said what it was in my heart to say:—

"Saving that if Ruth Bellen-den needs a friend, she'll find twenty-six aboard this ship, to say nothing of the cook's boy and the dog. You've a nice mind, Mister Jacob, but you've a deal to larn when it comes to women. My poor old father, who hailed from Shoreham——"

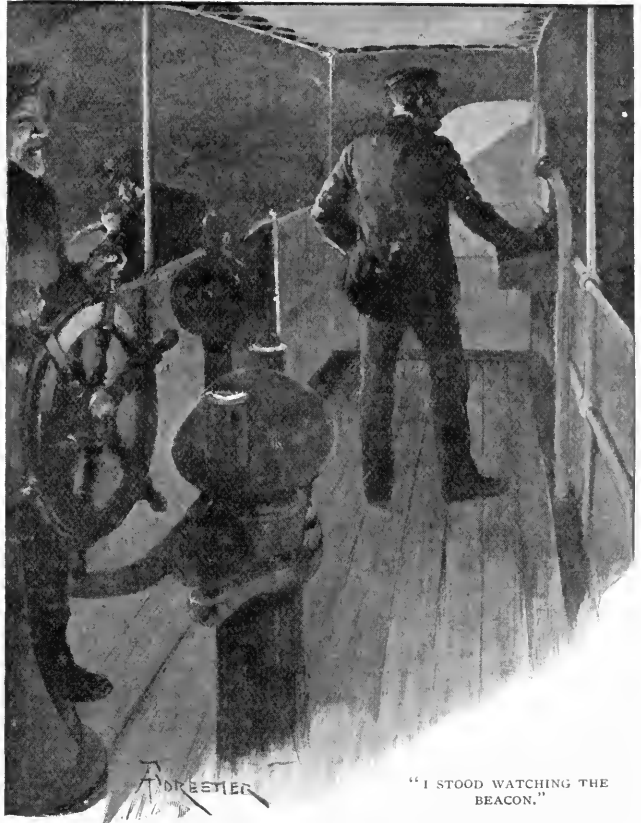
"It was Newport yesterday, Peter."

"Aye, so it were—so it were. But, Newport or Shoreham, he'd a precious good notion of the sex, and what he said I'll stand by. 'Get 'em on

their feet to the music,' says he, 'and you can lead 'em anywhere.' 'Tis Gospel truth that, Mister Jacob."

"But a man had better mind his steps," said I. "For my part, I shouldn't be surprised if Ruth Bellen-den's husband gave us the cold shoulder to-morrow and sent us about our business. However, the sea's free to all men, lads, and the morn will show. By your leave we'll have a bit of supper and after that turn in. We shall want all our wits about us when daylight comes."

They agreed to this, and without further parley we went on deck and heard what the lad "Dolly" Venn had to tell us. It was full dark now and the island was hidden from our view. The beacon shone with a steady white glare which, under the circumstances, was almost uncanny. I asked the lad if he had sighted any ships in toward the land or if signals had been made. He answered me that no ship had passed in or out or any rocket been fired. "And I do believe, sir," he said, "that we shall find the harbour on the far side of yonder height."



"I STOOD WATCHING THE BEACON."

"The morning will show us, lad," said I; "go down to your supper, for I mean to take this watch myself."

They left me on the bridge. The wind had fallen until it was scarce above a moan in the shrouds. I stood watching the beacon as a man who watches the window light of one who has been dear to him.

CHAPTER II.

WE GO ASHORE AND LEARN STRANGE THINGS. I HAVE told how it came about that I sailed for Ken's Island, and now I shall tell what happened when I went ashore to find Ruth Bellenden.

We put off from the ship at six bells in the morning watch. Dolly Venn, who was rated as fourth officer, was with me in the launch, and Harry Doe, the boatswain, at the tiller. I left Mister Jacob on the bridge, and gave him my orders to stand in-shore as near as might be, and to look for my coming at sunset—no later. "Whatever passes," said I, "the night will find me on board again. I trust to bring you good news, Mister Jacob—the best news."

"Which would be that we were to 'bout ship and home again," says he; and that I did not contradict.

Now, we were to the westward of the island when we put off, and neither my glass nor the others showed any good landing there. As the launch drew into toward the cliffs I began to get the lie of the place more clearly; and especially of what I call the mainland, which was wonderfully fresh and green in the sunlight and seemed to have some of the tropic luxuriance of more southern islands. About four miles long, I judged it to be, from the high black rock to which it rose at the southward point, to the low dog's-nosed reef which defended it to the north. Trees I could see, palms and that kind, and ripe green grasses on a stretch of real down-like land; but the cliffs themselves were steep and unpromising, and the closer we drew the less I liked the look of it.

"Dolly, my lad," I said at last, "you were the wise one, after all. Yon's no shore for an honest man; he being made like a man and not like an eagle. Let's try the starboard tack and see what luck will send us."

We headed the launch almost due south, and began to round the headland. The men were elated, they didn't know at what; Dolly Venn had a boy's delight in the difficulty.

"An ugly shore, sir," he said, pleased at my compliment. "A very ugly shore. It would be a bad night which found a ship in

these parts and no better light than the fool's beacon we saw yesterday."

"As true as the parson's word," said I, "but, ugly or beautiful, I'll be up on those heights before twelve o'clock if I have to swim ashore. And speaking of that," said I, "there are men up yonder, or I'm a Dutchman!"

Well, he clapped his glass to his eye and searched the green grass land as I had done; but the light was over strong and the cliff quickly shut the view from us, so that we found ourselves presently in the loom of vast black rocks, with the tide running like a whirlpool, and a great sword-fish reef, a mile from the shore, perhaps, to catch any fool that didn't want sea room. I took the tiller myself from this point, and standing well out I brought the launch round gingerly enough, but the water was deep and good once we were on the lee side; and no sooner did we head north again than I espied the cove and knew where Ruth Bellenden had gone ashore.

"It's there, lad," said I, "yonder, where the sand sparkles. There'll be a way up the cliff and good anchorage. No one but an Irishman would buy an island without a harbour; you tell Peter Bligh that when we go aboard again."

"Peter says he's only Irish on the mother's side, sir; that's what makes him big-hearted towards the women. He'll be dying to come ashore if there are any petticoats hereabouts."

"They haven't much use for that same garment on the Pacific Islands," said I. "Peter can marry cheap here, if it's the milliners' bills he's minding—but I doubt, lad, from the look of it, whether we'll find a jewel in this port. It's a wild-looking place, to be sure it is."

Indeed, and it was. Viewed from the eastward sea, I call Ken's Island the most fearsome place I have come across in all my fifteen years afloat. Vast cliffs, black and green and crystal, rose up sheer from the water in precipices for all the world like mighty steps. By here and there, as the ground sloped away to the northward, there were forests of teak (at least, I judged them to be that), pretty woods with every kind of palm, green valleys, and grassy pastures. The sands of the cove were white as snow, and shone like so many precious stones pounded up to make a sea beach. On the north side only was there barrenness—for that seemed but a tongue of low land and black rock thrust straight out into the sea.

But elsewhere it was a spectacle to impress a man; and I began, perhaps, to admit that Edmond Czerny had more than a crank's whim in his mind when he took little Ruth Bellenden to such a shore for her honeymoon. He had a fancy for wild places, said I, and this was the very spot for him. But Miss Ruth, who had always been one for the towns and cities and the bright things of life—what did she think of it? I should learn that, if she were ashore yonder.

Now, we put straight in to the cove where the silver sand was, and no sooner was I ashore than I espied a rickety wooden ladder rising almost straight up to the cliff's head, which hereabouts was no more than 60ft. high. Neither man nor beast was on the beach, nor did I make out any sign of human habitation whatever. It was just a little sandy bay, lone and desolate; but directly I slipped out of the launch I discovered footprints leading to the ladder's foot, and I knew that men had gone up before me, that very morning it must be, seeing that the tide had ebbed and the sand was still wet. At another time I might have asked myself why nobody came out to meet us, and why there was no look-out for the island to hail a strange ship in the offing; but I was too eager to go ashore, and, for that matter, had my feet on the sand almost before the launch grounded.

"Do you, Dolly, come up with me," said

I; "the others will stand by to anchor until we come down again. If it's not in an hour, lads, go back and get your dinners; but look for me at sunset anyway, for I've no mind to sleep ashore, and that you may be sure of."

They took the orders and pushed the launch off. Dolly and I ran up the crazy



"DOLLY AND I RAN UP THE CRAZY LADDER."

ladder and found ourselves at the cliff's head, but no better off in the matter of seeing than we had been before. True, the launch looked far down, like a toy ship in a big basin of blue water; we could distinguish the sword-fish reef, as the lad called it, and other reefs to the east and north, but the place we stood on was shut in by a black wood of teak and blue ebony, and, save for the rustling of the great leaves, we couldn't hear a sound. As for path through the plantation, that was covered with long, rank grass, and some marsh or other—I don't know what it was—gave a pungent, heavy

odour which didn't suit a seaman's lungs. I was set against the place from the first—didn't like it, and told the lad as much.

"Dolly," said I, "the sooner we have a ship's planking under our feet again the better for our constitutions. If there's a house in this locality, the ladder is the road to it, unless one of Peter Bligh's countrymen built it. Put your best foot foremost, my lad. We'll dine early if we don't lunch late."

With this I struck the path through the wood and went straight on, not listening to the lad's chatter nor making any myself. The shade was welcome enough; there were pretty places for those that had eyes to see them—waterfalls splashing down from the moss-grown rocks above; little pools, dark and wonderfully blue; here and there a bit of green, which might have been the lawn of a country house. But of dwelling or of people I saw nothing, and to what the boy fancied that he saw I paid no heed.

"You're dreaming it, young gentleman," said I, "for look now, who should be afraid of two unarmed seamen, and why should any honest man be ashamed to show his face? If there are men peeping behind the trees, well, let them peep; and good luck go with them. It doesn't trouble me, and I don't suppose it will take your appetite away. You aren't afraid of them, surely?"

It was an unkind thing to have said, and the lad rightly turned upon me.

"Why, captain," cried he, "I would never be afraid while I was with you."

"Proudly put, my boy, and a compliment I won't forget. What sort of men did you say that they were?"

"One was old, with a goat's beard. He wore ragged breeches and a seaman's blouse. I saw him directly we entered the wood. The others were up in the hills above the waterfall. They carried rifles."

"Come, come, Dolly," exclaimed I. "Put them in Prussian blue at once, and fly the German ensign. Rifles in a place like this—and two unarmed strangers against them! Why should the rogues hide their beautiful faces? If they would know all about us, what's to prevent them? Do we look like highwaymen or honest fellows? Be sure, my lad, that the young lady I am going to see wouldn't have any blacklegs about her house. Ruth Bellenden's too clever for that. She'd send them about their business quick enough, as she's sent many a one when I was the skipper of her yacht. Did they tell you that, Dolly—that your skipper used to sail the smartest schooner-yacht that ever flew the ensign—"

The boy looked up at me and admitted frankly that he knew something.

"They said the young lady owned the *Manhattan*, sir. I never asked much about it. The men were fond of her, I believe."

"Adored her, lad. She was the daughter of Rupert Bellenden, who made a mint of money by building the Western American Railroad, and afterwards in the steel way. He was drowned at sea when the *Elbe* went down. His son got the business, but the daughter took the house and fortune—at least, the best part of it. She was always a rare one for the sea, and owned a biggish boat in her father's time. When he died she bought the *Manhattan*, more's the pity, for it carried her to Mediterranean ports, and there she took up with the fiddler. He was a Chevalier or something, and could look a woman through and through. What money he had was made, the Lord knows where, not out of fiddling, I'll be bound, for his was no music to set the tongue lolling. He'd been in the Pacific a while, they say, and was a Jack-of-all-trades in America. That's how he came across these islands, you may imagine—slap in the seaway to Yokohama as they are. There's been many a good ship ashore on Ken's Island, lad, believe me, and there'll be many another. 'Tis no likely place to bring a young wife to, and none but a madman would have done it."

I told him all this just in a natural way, as one man speaking to another of something which troubled his mind. Not that he made much of it—how should he?—for there were a hundred things to look at, and his eyes were here and there and everywhere; now up at the great black rocks above us; now peering into a deep gorge, over which a little wooden bridge carried us, just for all the world like a scaffold thrown from tree to tree of the wood. It was a rare picture, I admit, and when we came out of the thicket at last and saw the lower island spread before us like a chart, with its fields of crimson flowers, its waterfalls, its bits of pasture, and its blue seas beyond, a man might well have stood to tell himself that Nature never made a fairer place. For my part, I began to believe again that Edmond Czerny knew what he was about when he built a house for Miss Ruth on such a spot; and I was just about to tell the lad as much when a man came running up the path and, hailing us in a loud voice, asked us where the deuce we were going to—or something not more civil. And, at this, I brought to and looked him up and down and answered him as a seaman should.

"To the deuce yourself," said I; "what's that to do with you, and what may your name happen to be?"

He was a big man, dressed in blue serge, with a peak cap and a seaman's blouse. He had a long brown beard and a pock-marked face, and he carried a spy-glass under his arm. He had come up from the grassy valley below—and there I first saw the roof of a low bungalow, and the gardens about it. That was Ruth's home, I said, and this fellow was one of Czerny's yacht hands.

seemed to think better of it, and changed his tone entirely.

"Avast," cries he, with a bit of a laugh, "you're one of the right sort, and no mistaking that! And where would you be from, and what would you be wanting here?" he asks, grown civil as a bagman with a bit of ribbon to sell.

"Shipmate," says I, "if I'm one of the right sort, my port's Southampton and my flag's the ensign. Take me down to Mme. Czerny, whom I see among the flower-beds



"Not so fast, not so fast," cried he; "do you know that this is private land, and you've no business ashore, here?"

"Why," says I, "haven't we come ashore to see you, my beauty, and doesn't the spectacle reward us? 'Bout ship," says I, "and have done with it. My business is with your mistress, whom I knew before your brother was hanged at 'Frisco."

He swore a big oath at this, and, I do believe, was half of the mind to try which was the better man; but when he had looked down at the gardens of the bungalow, and a white figure was plainly to be seen there, he

yonder, and you shall know enough about me in five minutes to bring the tears to your beautiful eyes. And come," says I, chaffing him, "are there any girls in this bit of a paradise? If so," says I, "I should call 'em lucky when I look at you."

Well, he took it sourly enough, but I could see he was mighty curious to hear more about me, and as we went down a winding path to the bungalow in the valley he put many questions to me, and I tried to answer

"AND WHERE WOULD YOU BE FROM, AND WHAT WOULD YOU BE WANTING HERE?" HE ASKS."

them civilly. Like all seamen he had no silent wits of his own, and every word he thought, that he must speak.

"The guv'nor's not here," he said; "gone to 'Frisco. Lucky for you, for he don't like strangers. Aye," he goes on, "he's a wonderful man for his own way; to be sure he is. You'll be aboard and away before sunset, or you might see him. Take my advice and put about. The shore's unwholesome," says he.

"By the looks of you," says I, "you've nothing more than jaundice, and that I can put up with. As for your guv'nor, I remember him well when he and I did the light fandango together in European ports. He was always a wonder with the fiddle. My mistress could lead him like a pug-dog. I don't doubt she's a bit of a hand at it still."

Now, this set him thinking, and he put two and two together, I suppose, and knew pretty well who I was.

"You'll be Jasper Begg that sailed the lady's yacht, *Manhattan*?" says he. "Well, I've heard of you often, and from her own lips. She'll be pleased to see you, right enough—though what the guv'nor might say is another matter. You see," he went on, "this same island is a paradise, sure as thunder; but it's lonely for women-kind, and your mistress, she don't take to it kindly. Not that she's complaining, or anything of that sort. A lady who has rings for her fingers and bells for her toes, and all real precious, same as any duchess might wear, she don't complain long. Why, my guv'nor could make his very teeth out of diamonds and not miss 'em, come to that! But his missus is always plaguing him to take her to Europe, and that game. As if he don't want a wife in his own home, and not in another man's, which is sense, Mister Begg, though it is spoke by a plain seaman."

I said, "Aye, aye," and held my tongue, knowing that he would go on with it. We were almost down at the house now, and the cliffs stood like a great cloud of solid rock, above which a loom of smoke was floating. Dolly walked at my heels like a patient dog. My own feelings are not for me to tell. I was going to see Ruth Bellenden again. Why, she was there in yonder garden, and nothing between us but this great hulking yellow boy, who took to buttonholing me as a parson buttonholes his churchwarden when he wants a new grate in his drawing-room.

"Now," says he, standing before me as one who had half a mind to block the road, "you be advised by me, Mister Begg, and

cut this job short. Don't you be listening to a woman's parley, for it's all nonsense. I've done wrong to let you ashore, perhaps—perhaps I haven't; but, ashore or afloat, it's my business to see that the guv'nor's orders is carried out, and carried out they will be, one man or twenty agen 'em. Do you take a plain word or do you not, Mister Begg?"

"I take whatever's going, and don't trouble about the sugar," says I; and then, putting him aside, I lifted the latch of the garden gate, and went in and saw Miss Ruth.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH JASPER BEGG MAKES UP HIS MIND WHAT TO DO.

Now, she was sitting in the garden, in a kind of arbour built of leaves, and near by her was her relative, the rats'-tailed old lady we used to call Aunt Rachel. The pair didn't see me as I passed in, but a Chinese servant gave "Good-day" to the yellow man we'd picked up coming down; and, at that, Miss Ruth—for so I call her, not being able to get Mme. Czerny into my head—Miss Ruth, I say, stood up and, the colour tumbling into her cheeks like the tide into an empty pool, she stood for all the world as though she were struck dumb and unable to say a word to any man. I, meanwhile, fingered my hat and looked foolish; for it was an odd kind of job to have come twelve thousand miles upon, and what to say to her with the hulking seaman at my elbow the Lord forgive me if I knew.

"Miss Ruth," says I at last, "I'm here according to orders, and the ship's here, and we're waiting for you to go aboard——"

Well, she seemed to hear me like one who did not catch the meaning of it. I saw her put her hand to her throat as though something were choking her, and the old lady, the one we called Aunt Rachel, cried, "God bless me," two or three times together. But the yellow man was the next to speak, and he crossed right over to our Miss Ruth's side, and talked in her ear in a voice you could have heard up at the hills.

"You'll not be going aboard to-day, lady. Why, what would the master have to say, he coming home from foreign parts and you not ashore to meet him? You didn't say nothing about any ship, not as I can remember, and mighty pleased the guv'nor will be when he knows about it. Shall I tell this party he'd better be getting aboard again, eh, ma'am? Don't you think as he'd better be getting aboard again?"

He shouted this out for all the world like a man hailing from one ship to another. I don't know what put it into my head, but I knew from that moment that my mistress was afraid, aye, deadly afraid, as it is given few to fear in this life. Not that she spoke of it, or showed it by any sign a stranger might have understood; but there was a look in her eyes which was clear to me; "and by the heavens above," said I to myself, "I'll know the truth this day, though there be one or a hundred yellow boys!" None the less, I held my tongue as a wise man should, and what I said was spoken to the party with the beard.

"You've a nice soft voice for a nightingale, that you have," says I; "if you'd let yourself out for a fog-horn to the Scilly Isles, you'd go near to make your fortune! Is the young lady deaf that you want to bawl like a harbour-master? Easy, my man," says I, "you'll hurt your beautiful throat."

Well, he turned round savage enough, but my mistress, who had stood all the while like a statue, spoke now for the first time, and holding out both her hands to me she cried:—

"Oh, Captain Begg, Captain Begg, is it you at last, to walk right here like this? I can't believe it," she said; "I really can't believe it!"

"Why, that's so," said I, catching her American accent, which was the prettiest thing you ever heard; "I'm on the way to 'Frisco, and I put in here according to my promise. My ship's out yonder, Miss Ruth, and there's some aboard that knows you—Peter Bligh and Mister Jacob; and this one, this is little Dolly Venn," said I, presenting him, "though he'll grow bigger by-and-by."

With this I pushed the boy forward, and he, all silly and blushing as sailors will be when they see a pretty woman above their station—he took her hand and heaved it like a pump-handle; while old Aunt Rachel, the funny old woman in the glasses, she began to talk a lot of nonsense about seamen, as she always did, and for a minute or two we might have been a party of friends met at a street corner.

"I'm glad to find you well, Captain Begg," said she. "Such a dangerous life, too, the mariner's.

I always pity you poor fellows when you climb the rattlesnakes on winter's nights."

"Ratlins you mean, ma'am," said I, "though for that matter, a syllable or two don't count either way. And I hope you're not poorly, ma'am, on this queer shore."

"I like the island," says she, solemn and stiff-like; "my dear nephew is an eccentric, but we must take our bread as we find it on this earth, Mister Begg, and thankful for it too. Poor Ruth, now, she is dreadfully distressed and unhappy; but I tell her it will all come right in the end. Let her be patient a little while and she will have her own way. She wants for nothing here—she has every comfort. If her husband chooses such a home for her she must submit. It is our duty to submit to our husbands, captain, as the catechism teaches us."

"Aye, when you've got 'em," thought I, but I nodded my head to the old lady and turned to my mistress, who was now speaking to me.

"You'll lunch here; why, yes, captain—you mustn't find us inhospitable, even if you leave us at once. Mr. Denton, will you



"‘MISTRESS,’ I SAID, ‘THE
SHIP’S THERE—SHALL
WE GO OR STAY?’”

please to tell them that Captain Begg lunches with me—as soon as possible?”

She turned to the yellow man to give him the order; but there was no mistaking the look which passed between them, saying on her side: “Allow me to do this,” on his, “You will suffer for it afterwards.” But he went up to the veranda of the house right enough, and while he was bawling to the cook I spoke the first plain word to Mme. Czerny.

“Mistress,” I said, “the ship’s there—shall we go or stay?”

I had meant it to be the plain truth between us; on her part the confession whether she needed me or did not; on mine the will to serve her whatever might happen to me. To my dying day I shall never forget her answer.

“Go,” she said, so low that it was little more than a whisper, “but, oh, for God’s sake, Jasper Begg, come back to me again.”

I nodded my head and turned the talk. The man Denton, the one with the yellow beard (rated as Kess Denton on the island), was back at my side almost before she had finished. The old lady began to talk about “curling-spikes” and “blue Saint Peters” and how much the anchor weighed, and all that sort of blarney which she thought ship-shape and suited to a poor sailor-man’s understanding. I told her a story of a shark that swallowed a missionary and his hymn-book, and always swam round our ship at service times afterwards—and that kept her thinking a bit. As for little Dolly Venn, he couldn’t keep his eyes off Miss Ruth—and I didn’t wonder, for mine went that way pretty often. Aye, she had changed, too, in those twelve months that had passed since last I saw her, the prettiest bride that ever held out a finger for a ring in the big church at Nice. Her cheeks were all fallen away and flushed with a colour which was cruelly unhealthy to see. The big blue eyes, which I used to see full of laughter and a young girl’s life, were ringed round with black, and pitiful when they looked at you. The hair, parted above the forehead, as it always was, and brought down in curls above her little ears, didn’t seem to me so full of golden threads as it used to be. But it was good to hear her plucky talk, there at the dinner-table, when she chattered away like some sweet singing bird, and Dolly couldn’t turn away his eyes, and the yellow boy stood, sour and savage, behind her chair, and threw out hints for me to sheer off which might have moved the Bass Rock. Not that he need have troubled

himself, for I had made up my mind already what to do; and no sooner was the food stowed away than I up and spoke about the need of getting on again and such like. And with that I said “Good-bye” to Mistress Ruth and “Good-bye” to the old woman, and had a shot left in my locker for the yellow boy, which I don’t doubt pleased him mightily.

“Good luck to you,” says I; “if you’d a wisp of your hair I’d put it in my locket and think of you sometimes. When you want anything from London you just shout across the sea and we’ll be hearing you. Deadman’s Horn is nothing to you,” said I; “you’d scare a ship out of the sea if you wasn’t gentle to her.”

Mind you, I said all this as much to put him off as anything else, for I’d been careful enough to blab no word about the *Southern Cross* being Miss Ruth’s very own ship, nor about her orders that we should call at Ken’s Island; and I knew that when a man’s angry at what you say to him he doesn’t think much of two and two making four, but as often as not makes them eight or ten. Maybe, said I, he’ll make it out that I’m on a tramp bound for ’Frisco and have touched here on the way—and certainly he won’t look for my coming back again once he sees our smoke on the sky-line. Nor was I wrong. My mistress was to tell me that much before twelve hours had passed.

And so it was that I said “Good-bye” to her, she standing at the garden-gate with a brave smile upon her pretty face, and the yellow man behind her like a savage dog that is afraid to bite, but has all the mind to. At the valley’s head I turned about, and she was still there, looking up wistfully to the hills we trod. Thrice I waved my hand to her, and thrice she answered, and then together, the lad and I, we entered the dark wood and saw her no more.

“Your best leg forward, lad,” said I to him, “and mum’s the word. There’s work to do on the ship, and work ashore for a woman’s sake. Are you game for that, Dolly—are you game, my boy?”

Well, he didn’t answer me. Someone up in the black gorge above fired a rifle just as I spoke; and the bullet came singing down like a bird on the wing. Not a soul could I see, not a sound could I hear when the rolling echoes had passed away. It was just the silence of the thicket and of the great precipices which headed it—a silence which might freeze a man’s heart because the danger which threatened him was hidden.

"Crouch low to the rocks, lad, and go easy," cried I, when my wits came back again; "that's a tongue it doesn't do to quarrel with. The dirty skunks—to fire on unarmed men! But we'll return it, Dolly; as I live I'll fire a dozen for every one they send us."

"Return it, sir," says he; "but aren't you going aboard?"

"Aye," says I, "and coming back again like drift on an open sea. Now let me see you skip across that bridge, and no mistake about it."

He darted across the chasm's bridge like a chamois. I followed him quick and clumsy. If my heart was in my mouth—well, let that pass. Not for my own sake did I fear mortal man that day, but for the sake of a woman whose very life I believed to be in danger.

CHAPTER IV.

WE GO ABOARD, BUT RETURN AGAIN.

We made the ship safely when twenty minutes were passed, and ten minutes later Mister Jacob and Peter Bligh were in my cabin with me.

"Lads," I said, for it was not a day when a man picked his talk; "lads," said I, "this ship goes full steam ahead for 'Frisco, and you'll be wanting to know the reason why. Well, that's right and proper. Let me tell you that she's steaming to 'Frisco because it's the shortest way to Ken's Island."

They looked queer at this, but my manner kept them silent. Every man aboard the *Southern Cross* had heard the gun fired up in the hills, and everyone knew that Dolly Venn and the skipper had raced for their

lives to the water's edge. "What next?" they asked; and I meant to tell them.

"Yes," said I, "the shortest way to Ken's Island, and no mistake about it. For what does a man do when he sees someone in a house and the front door's slammed in his

face? Why, he goes to the back door certainly, and for choice when the night's dark and the blinds are down. That's what I'm going to do this night, lads, for the sake of a bit of a girl you and I would sail far to serve."

They said, "Aye, aye," and drew their chairs closer. The men had been piped down to dinner, but Peter Bligh forgot his, and that was extraordinary peculiar in him. Mister Jacob took snuff as though it were chocolate powder, and the whole of a man spoke from his little eyes.

"Listen," said I, beginning to tell them what you know already, "here have we sailed twelve thousand miles at Ruth Bellenden's order, and how does she receive us? Why, with a nod she might give a neighbour going by in the street——"

"They not being on speaking terms except in church," put in Peter Bligh.

"Or she wishing him to get on with

his business," said Mister Jacob, "and not to gossip when there was work to do."

"Be that as it may," I ran on, "the facts are as plain to me as eight bells for noon. Ruth Bellenden's married to a foreigner who's next door to a madman. Why, look at it—what was the only word she had the time or the chance to say? 'For God's sake,



"HE DARTED ACROSS THE CHASM'S BRIDGE LIKE A CHAMOIS."

come back, Jasper Begg,' says she. And what am I going to do upon that, gentlemen? Why, I'm going back, so help me Heaven, this very night to learn her trouble."

"And to bring her aboard where she could tell it on a fair course, so to speak. You'll do that, Mister Begg?"

"The night will show what I shall do, Mister Jacob. Was there ever such a story? A man to marry the best creature that ever put on a pretty bonnet, and to carry her to a God-forsaken shore like this! And to ill-treat her there! Aye, that's it. If ever a woman's eyes spoke to me of hard treatment, it was Ruth Bellenden's this morning. She's some trouble, lads, some dreadful trouble. She doesn't even speak of it to me. The yellow boy I've made mention of stood by her all the time. We talked like two that pass by on the ocean. Who'll gainsay that it was an unnatural thing? No mortal man can, with reason!"

"Aye, there's precious little reason in it, by what I make out, captain. You'll know more when the young lady's aboard here——"

"And the yellow boy's head has a bump on the top of it, like the knob what used to hang down from my mother's chandelay—but that's idle talking. What time do you put her about to go ashore, captain?"

I was glad to see them coming to it like this, and I fell to the plan without further parley.

"A fair question and a fair answer," said I; "this ship goes about at eight bells, Peter. To Mister Jacob here I trust the safety of the good fellows who go ashore with me. If we can bring the mistress aboard to-night, well and good, we've done the best day's work we ever set our hands to. If not, that work must rest until to-morrow night, or the night after or the night after that. Eight days from now if it happens that nothing is heard from the land and no news of us, well, the course is plain. In that case it will be full steam ahead to 'Frisco, and from there a cable to Kenrick Bellenden, and the plain intimation that his sister has pretty bad need of him on Ken's Island."

"And of an American warship, if one is forthcoming."

"It may be, Mister Jacob; it may be that though the devil's ashore these are the only ones that could tell you that. But you're a man of understanding, and your part will be done. I rely upon you as between shipmates."

He took a pinch of snuff, and flapping his coat-tails (for he was always rigged out in

the naval officer way) he answered what I wished.

"As between shipmates, I will do my duty," said he.

"I knew it; I've known it from the beginning," said I. "What's left when you've done is the shore part, and that's not so easy. Peter Bligh's coming, and I couldn't well leave Dolly on board. Give me our hulking carpenter, Seth Barker, and I'll lighten the ship no more. We're short-handed as it is. And, besides, if four won't serve, then forty would be no better. What we can do yonder wits, and not revolvers, must bring about. But I'll not go with sugar-sticks, you take my word for it, and any man that points a gun at me will wish he'd gone shooting sheep."

"Aye, aye, to that," cried Peter, who was ever a man for a fight; "the shooting first and the civil words after. That's sense and no blarney. When my poor father was tried at Swansea, his native place, for hitting an Excise man with a ham——"

"Peter, Peter," cried I, "'tis not with hams you'll be hitting folks yonder, take my word for it. This job may find us on a child's errand or it may find us doing men's work. Eight bells on the first watch will tell the whole of the story. Until that time I shall hold my tongue about it, but I don't go ashore as I go to a picnic, and I don't make a boast about what I may presently cry out about."

Well, they were both of my way of thinking, and when we'd talked a little more about it, and I'd opened the arm-chest and looked over the few guns and pistols we'd got there, and we'd called the lad Dolly down and promised him that he should come with us, and the men had been given to understand that the skipper was to go ashore by-and-by on an important business, Peter and the others went to their dinner and I took my turn on the bridge. The swell was running strongly then, and the wind blew fresh from the north-east. We'd lost all sight of the island, and spoke but one ship, a small mail steamer from Santa Cruz bound for the Yellow Sea, which signalled us "All well" at six bells in the afternoon watch. From that time I went dead slow and began to bring the *Southern Cross* about. The work was begun that very hour, I always say.

Now, I've told all this, short and brief, and with no talk of my own about it. The thing had come so sudden, I knew so little of Ruth Bellenden's trouble or of what had befallen her on the island, that I was like a man in

the dark groping blindly, yet set on hearing the truth. As for the crew, well, you may be sure that Dolly Venn had put his side of the story about, and when they knew that my mistress was ashore there and in some danger, I believe they'd have put me in irons if I'd so much as spoken of going back. Risky it was, so much I won't deny; but who wouldn't risk more than his own paltry skin to save a woman in trouble, and she, so to speak, a shipmate? There was not a man aboard, I'll stake my life, who wouldn't have gone to the land willingly for Ruth Bellenden's sake though he'd been told, sure and certain, that Ken's Island must be his grave. And we'd always the ship, mind you, and the knowledge that she would go to 'Frisco to get us help. A fool's hope, I say now. For how could we know that the *Southern Cross* would be at the bottom of the sea, fifteen thousand fathoms down, before the week was run? We couldn't know it; yet that was what happened, and that is why no help came to us.

We had put the ship about at six bells in the afternoon watch, but it was eight bells in the second dog (the night being too clear for my liking and a full moon showing bright in the sky) that we sighted Ken's Island for the second time, and for the second time prepared to go ashore. The longboat was ready by this time, her barrels full of water and her lockers full of biscuit. Such arms as we were to carry were partly stowed in water-proof sheeting — the rifles, and the cartridges for them; but the revolvers we carried, and a good Sheffield

knife a man, which we weren't going to cut potatoes with. For the rest, I made them put in a few stout blankets, and more rations than might have served for such a trip. "Good beginnings make good endings," said I; "what we haven't need of, lads, we can carry aboard again. The longboat's back won't ache, be sure of it."

All this, I say, was done when the moon showed us the island like a great barren rock rising up sheer from the sea. And when it was done, Mister Jacob called my attention to something which in the hurry of shore-going I might never have seen at all or thought about. It was nothing less than this—that their fool's beacon was out to-night, and all the sea about it as black as ink. Whoever set up the light, then, did not use it for a seaman's benefit, but for his own whim. I reckoned up the situation at a glance, and even at that early stage I began to know the terrible meaning of it.

"Mister Jacob," said I, "those that keep that beacon are either fools or knaves."

"Or both, sir," said he.

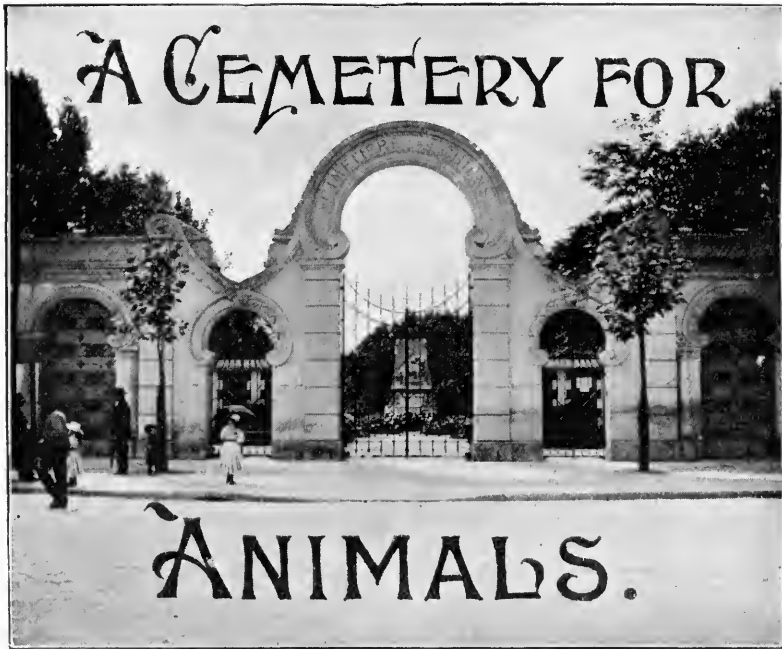
"Which one is the own brother to the other. Aye, captain, 'tis lucky ye've the parish lantern, as my poor father used to say when—"

But Peter Bligh never finished it that night. The words were still in his mouth when a rocket shot up over the sea and, bursting in a cloud of gold-blue sparks, cast a weird, cold light upon rock and reef and all that troubled sea. And as the rocket fell our big carpenter, Seth Barker, standing aft by the hatch, cries out: "Ship ashore! Ship ashore, by—!"



"SHIP ASHORE!"

(To be continued.)



BY EDOUARD CHARLES.



CEMETERY for dogs, cats, and domestic pets generally, from a canary to a monkey. Outrageous! Splendid! Of course, as the matter strikes you so you fit the exclamation. Different persons see it in different lights. Lovers of the truest friend of man will disagree with the opinions of those to whom a dog is always a dog and never anything else, fit only for more kicks than crusts during life and the river or the gutter in death. And those interested in the public health will disagree with them likewise.

From the hygienic point, at least in the case of the more substantial and domestic animals, such a cemetery is necessary; but whether or not it is sensible, or in good taste, to go so far as to erect monuments, more or less costly, inscribed with affectionate epitaphs, is a moot point; apart from the fact that it is the outcome of sentiment and a well-stocked purse. London has its burial-ground for the pet dogs and cats of the wealthy close to Hyde Park; in Brussels there is a cemetery for this purpose in the Laeken Park; but it is in Paris, where nothing is done by halves that is worth doing at all, that will be found the finest of all

animal graveyards, and this notwithstanding that it is the newest.

La Nécropole Zoologique, as the spot is named, is situated some short distance outside the capital itself, at Asnières, in the centre of the River Seine. The notorious *Ile des Ravageurs* would, undoubtedly, always have been kept fresh in the memories of Parisians by the terrible tales of Eugene Sue concerning Parisian suburban life. It was a frightful place in the days of which the noted author wrote—a social cancer; its inhabitants were beasts in human form—thieves and murderers of both sexes in whose hands the lives of honest men were not worth a moment's purchase.

Time and a determined police, however, have changed all that, and to-day no more peaceful spot than this *Ile des Chiens*, as it has been rechristened, could be imagined. Far from the madding crowd, away from the noise and bustle of the busy world, surrounded by tall trees which cast a welcome shade over the ground when the sun shines warmly and tempers the breeze to the sweet-smelling flowers when the wind blows across the river, it is an ideal nook for the purpose to which it has been devoted.

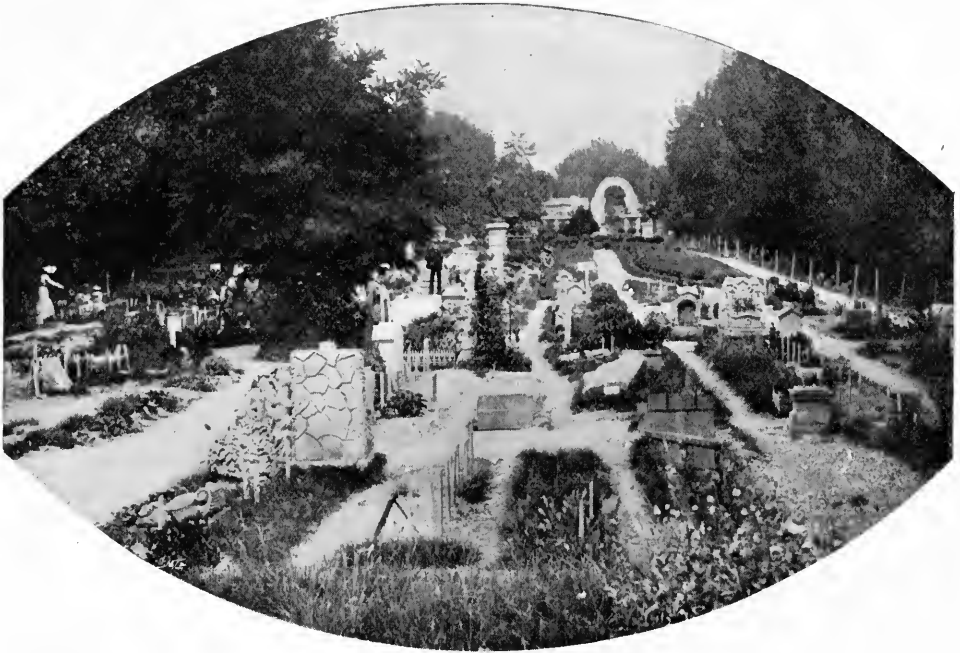
Whatever can be said on sentimental

grounds against the innovation, its success manifests beyond doubt that it fills a long-felt want ; for, although the *Société Française Anonyme du Cimetière pour Chiens et autres Animaux Domestiques* was only founded a couple of years since and the cemetery itself only opened last year, some hundreds of persons have already displayed in a very material manner their devotion to and remembrance of deceased pets.

When its founder mooted the scheme abroad he had excellent data to go upon, and he appealed both to sense and sentiment, and we must not omit gratitude, of which sentiment was the outcome. The canine population of Paris runs into 150,000. The average life of

the waters of the Seine became polluted, and in the gutters of the city itself and outside the fortifications the dead were deposited by night. It is a difficulty the municipal authorities have done nothing to cope with even to-day, but they pay annually a sum of no less than 4,000 francs for the recovery of dogs' bodies.

With a view to ameliorating this sad condition of affairs and providing for those whose sentiments prompted them to give animals that had perhaps been their life-long companions decent interment, Mr. Georges Harmois, a well-known French *littérateur*, philanthropist, and lover of animals, proposed *la Nécropole*



From a]

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CEMETERY.

[Photo.

a dog is eight years, and the death-rate is 12 per cent., or 18,000 yearly. By law they should each be interred ; an Act of Parliament passed in 1850 rendered it a punishable offence to dispose of a dead dog other than by burial. But it did not provide a public burial-ground. Persons who had private gardens and a regard for their deceased pets, if not for the law, buried them therein, but the life of Paris did not and does not provide a garden for every house, so even those who would have liked to prove themselves law-abiding citizens had perforce to tip the *concierge* to see that the body was judiciously disposed of. As a consequence

Zoologique. The suggestion received moral and financial support from many prominent persons, both in literary and sporting circles ; Emile Zola expressed himself as particularly in favour of the proposition, while Madame Durand, proprietress and editress of the only daily newspaper in the world run by women for women, interested the ladies of France in the scheme. So the "Dogs' Burial Company" was formed with a quarter of a million of francs capital, divided into shares of 100 francs each, and the first step was the purchase from the city authorities of the *Ile des Ravageurs*.

To-day it is quite a beautiful little park,

decorated with innumerable tombs and grave-stones, and resplendent with beautiful blooms, and as an object of curiosity certainly well repays a visit. The photograph which forms the heading of this article shows the handsome stone façade and gateways which strike the eye on approaching the place. The gates are kept closed, for admission is not free to the general public. A source of revenue to the company is the entrance fee of ten sous. To the right on entering is the picturesque lodge of the caretaker, where visitors purchase their tickets, and for an extra thirty centimes a copy of the company's journal, *L'Ami des Chiens*, which is published periodically and serves as a history of the cemetery and guide thereto. To the left is the office where are kept the archives of the company; portraits of celebrated dogs adorn the walls, and there is also a library consisting almost entirely of works and publications on dogs and their doings.

But what attracts the visitor more than either lodge or office is the enormous stone monument depicted in the accompanying photograph. It is the largest and most imposing example of the

sculptor's art to be found in the grounds, standing as it does some 30ft. in height, and it may, in fact, be described as the chief object in this exhibition. It was erected shortly after the opening of the cemetery to Barry, a great St. Bernard, the most celebrated of all the rescue dogs that have worked in the hospice on Mount Bernard. This noble animal saved in his time the lives of no fewer than forty persons who had been caught in storms on the mountain, and to the great regret of the monks sacrificed his own life in attempt-

ing to save the forty-first. His intelligence was almost human, and the story of his achievements during his twelve years' service would make a very interesting volume. One day whilst out with one of the brothers he obstinately refused to follow the monk along a certain route, but insisted upon making a détour of some distance to reach the desired goal. The good man gave in to the whim of the dog and had reason to be thankful for so doing, for even as they made the long détour an avalanche came down the mountain right across the path the monk would have taken.

In the photograph it will be seen that the dog has been sculptured with a child on his back, and thereby hangs a story—the story of what is regarded as being the most remarkable accomplishment of this sagacious animal.

While out on the mountains one day he found, partially buried in the snow, already deep in that slumber which runs silently into death, a child of very tender years that, losing its way, had fallen down in sheer

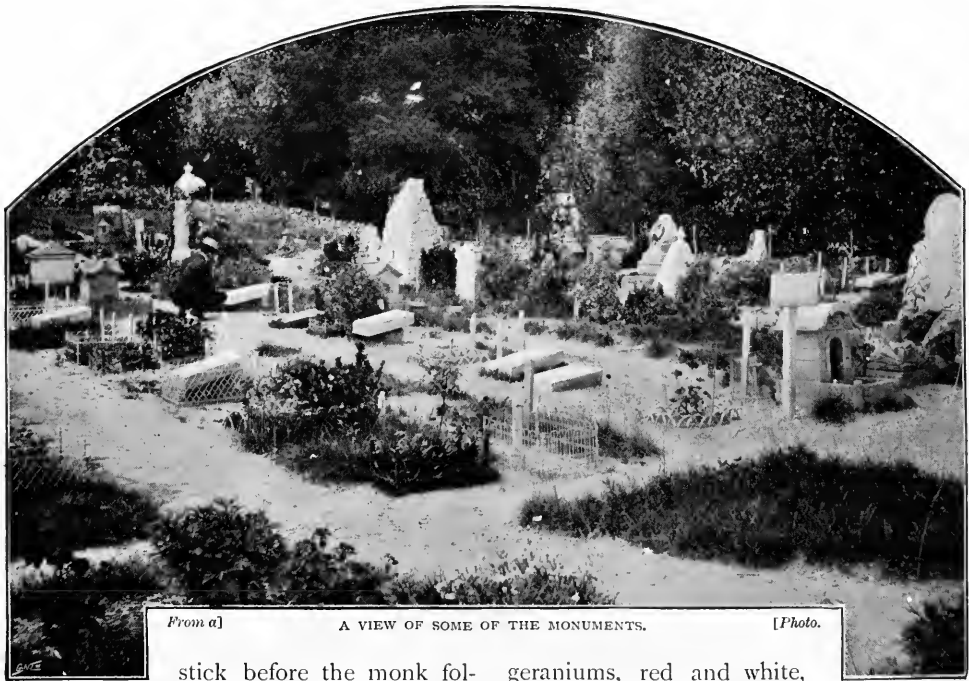
fatigue. Already the child was half-frozen, and must surely have added another to the mountain's toll of victims had not Barry licked it and warmed it back

to consciousness and action. This done, the dog, by its actions, made it clear to the infant that it was to mount its back and clasp its neck, and in this position the animal carried its burden to the hospice.

How eventually Barry met his death is, indeed, sad reading. On a tempestuous evening a traveller, struggling up the treacherous rocky path, saw approaching him in the waning light, with jaws gaping apart, what he took to be a ferocious beast bent upon assault. He was quick to act, striking the unfortunate dog on the head with his iron



THE MONUMENT TO BARRY, THE ST. BERNARD WHO SAVED FORTY LIVES.
From a Photo.



From a]

A VIEW OF SOME OF THE MONUMENTS.

[Photo.

stick before the monk following could prevent it. Barry fell with a terrible wound in his head, his life's blood staining crimson the snows from which he had rescued so many unfortunate wanderers, and in the hospice a few hours later, to the unutterable grief of the monks and the keenest regret of the man who had dealt the fatal blow, drew his last breath.

But though Barry has been dead near on a century past his memory is cherished by the French, who have shown their gratitude for his services and admiration for his bravery in erecting this monument, than which none was ever more deserving. Round its base runs a small garden of

geraniums, red and white, and tall marguerites, while some climbing plant covers the back of the stone to its top.

Passing here one enters on to a broad, long terrace, beautifully laid out with flowers, at the end of which

is the burial-ground itself. A general view of this will be gained from the above photograph, and a very quaint and pathetic sight it presents with its miniature tombs and tiny grave-stones, unnamed graves, and graves but newly made to order. As the full title of the company indicates, it is not only dogs that are here interred but also other domestic animals, and to meet requirements the ground has been

THE MONUMENT TO
EMMA.

From a Photo.

divided into four plots: there are the dogs' quarter, the cats' quarter, the birds' quarter, and a quarter for various animals. Amongst the latter is to be seen a stone which covers the grave of a monkey: "*Vendredi, le plus beau singe du monde.*"

The tombs are of many shapes, descriptions, and sizes; some very plain, a few very elaborate, the majority out of the common in appearance; and in most instances the attendant is paid to keep the graves in good condition by attending to the foliage and watering the flowers. They are either carved out or built up of stone, not marble, and in some cases support statues in bronze or stone, while others are adorned with photographs of the animals laid beneath. Generally the name and date of birth and death are given, more often than



JAPPY.
From a Photo.

dogs have fared better than any of the other animals, a particularly striking one being shown at the bottom of the previous page. The capital of a column supports a canopy, surmounted by a crown, beneath which a dog reposes at full length on a cushion. How beautifully this is carved will be readily seen from the photograph, which also shows the flower-covered grave at the base, railed round. Beneath the canopy a tablet at the back bears this inscription:

"*À la mémoire de ma chère Emma, du 12 Avril, 1889, au Août, 1900, fidèle compagne et seule amie de ma vie errante et desolée.*" This imposing erection was made to the order of Princess de Cerchiara Picnatelli, who further informs all readers: "*Elle me sauvé la vie en Mai, 1891.*"

of Princess de Cerchiara Picnatelli, who further informs all readers: "*Elle me sauvé la vie en Mai, 1891.*"



From a] A DOG-KENNEL GRAVE.

[Photo

not accompanied by some phrase or remark, cut out in the stone, conveying in what high esteem the animal dead and buried had been held by its master or mistress.

In the matter of handsome tombs the

Quite a different style of tomb is that of Jappy, who ended his earthly career in 1901 and exists now only in a stone image, sitting alert on a heap of boulders, on one of

which is inscribed—as expressing, no doubt, the sentiments of the animal's owner—a quotation upon Pascall, anything but flattering to mankind. It runs: "The more I see of men the better I like my dog," and gives one the impression that whoever was responsible for the building of this monument to a faithful canine companion had a very small opinion of the male sex.

Several of the monuments are in the style shown on page 718—i.e., in the shape of dog-kennels. This one has been erected to the memory of five dogs, "*en souvenir de nos bons et fideles petits amis*," and in the entrance to the niches stand the photographs of four of the quintet. A painted tombstone has been erected to "*Petit Mignon*," who was "nothing but a poor dog, innocent and good, killed in the flower of his youth by



From a]

AMIDA ZAWA.

[Photo.



From a]

PETIT MIGNON.

[Photo.

a civilized savage"; while over the grave of Amida Zawa rises a huge monument of boulders, with a carved stone jar in a recess in the centre filled with sweet blossoms, and ivy trails over the whole. Amongst other curious inscriptions appearing may be mentioned "*Leda: Nous l'aimions de trop, elle ne pouvait vivre*"; "*Follette, 4 ans: Pauvre Follette aimée, aujourd'hui tu reposes sous ce parterre fleuri. Sur ton corps le printemps effeuillera des roses; mais tu le méritais, tu possédait un cœur.*"

Concerning the graves of the cats, canaries, parrots, etc., there is little to say, though the felines are represented in goodly number. One grave with tiny bushes round it bears a photograph of the deceased disturber of sweet sleep, and also a small statue, while on another grave reposes a family of cats in china. On one tiny tomb, in the quarter devoted to birds, an empty cage



A CANARY'S MONUMENT.
From a Photo.

for 15 francs is granted a three years' lease of a piece of ground. In these cases the animals must be taken to the cemetery by their owners. For 25 francs, however, a five years' lease is obtained, while ten years' costs 50 francs, twenty years' 75 francs, thirty years' 100 francs, fifty years' 150 francs, over fifty years' 200 francs, and the high prices of 500 and 1,000 francs are charged for graves in exceptional situations, taken, of course, with the idea of erecting magnificent monuments thereon. From 25 francs upwards the charge also includes the transport of the deceased from the house to the cemetery in the official carrier-tricycle, ridden by a uniformed cyclist. At moderate prices the company also supplies coffins, takes photographs, and disinfects the apartment wherein the animal expired, and knowing that few people care to keep defunct creatures near them, the company has also provided a place where the corpse can await interment at a charge of 3 francs per day.

tells a pathetic story of the one-time sweet-tongued occupant who will trill no more.

Funerals here vary in price just as with the undertaker who caters for our custom. An animal can be buried as cheaply as 5 francs, or as much as 500 to 1,000 francs can be paid, and this is merely for interment and includes no monument. A simple grave, without any permission to erect any monument, costs the lowest sum just mentioned, but



From a

A CAT'S MONUMENT.

[Photo,

Of course, no ceremony of any kind is permitted in connection with the burial at the graveside, neither are there allowed on the graves any decorations which would be likely to give offence to religious feeling. Consequently it is a cemetery without a single cross, and though the graves are kept green and beautiful with growing flowers, no wreaths, real or artificial, will be found thereon.

The Man Who Disappeared



BY L. T. MEADE AND ROBERT EUSTACE.



rich man.

On a certain morning towards the end of September in the year 1897 I received the following letter :—

SIR,—I have been asked to call on you by a mutual friend, General Cornwallis, who accompanied my step-daughter and myself on board the *Osprey* to England. Availing myself of the General's introduction, I hope to call to see you or to send a representative about eleven o'clock to-day.

The General says that he thinks you can give me advice on a matter of some importance.

I am a Spanish lady. My home is in Brazil, and I know nothing of England or of English ways. I wish, however, to take a house near London and to settle down. This house must be situated in the neighbourhood of a large moor or common. It must have grounds surrounding it, and must have extensive cellars or basements, as my wish is to furnish a laboratory in order to carry on scientific research. I am willing to pay any sum in reason for a desirable habitation, but one thing is essential : the house must be as near London as is possible under the above conditions.—Yours obediently, STELLA SCAIFFE.

This letter was dated from the Carlton Hotel.

Now, it so happened that a client of mine had asked me a few months before to try and let his house—an old-fashioned and somewhat gruesome mansion, situated on a lonely part of Hampstead Heath. It occurred to me that this house would exactly suit the lady whose letter I had just read.

At eleven o'clock one of my clerks brought

me in a card. On it were written the words, "Miss Muriel Scaiffe." I desired the man to show the lady in, and a moment later a slight, fair-haired English girl entered the room.

"Mrs. Scaiffe is not quite well and has sent me in her stead. You have received a letter from my step-mother, have you not, Mr. Pleydell?"

"I have," I replied. "Will you sit down, Miss Scaiffe?"

She did so. I looked at her attentively. She was young and pretty. She also looked good, and although there was a certain anxiety about her face which she could not quite repress, her smile was very sweet.

"Your step-mother," I said, "requires a house with somewhat peculiar conditions?"

"Oh, yes," the girl answered. "She is very anxious on the subject. We want to be settled within a week."

"That is a very short time in which to take and furnish a house," I could not help remarking.

"Yes," she said, again. "But, all the same, in our case it is essential. My step-mother says that anything can be done if there is enough money."

"That is true in a sense," I replied, smilingly. "If I can help you I shall be pleased. You want a house on a common?"

"On a common or moor."

"It so happens, Miss Scaiffe, that there is a place called The Rosary at Hampstead which may suit you. Here are the particulars. Read them over for yourself and tell me if there is any use in my giving you an order to view."

She read the description eagerly, then she said :—

"I am sure Mrs. Scaiffe would like to see this house. When can we go?"

"To-day, if you like, and if you particularly wish it I can meet you at The Rosary at three o'clock."

"That will do nicely," she answered.

Soon afterwards she left me.

The rest of the morning passed as usual, and at the appointed hour I presented myself at the gates of The Rosary. A carriage was already drawn up there, and as I approached a tall lady with very dark eyes stepped out of it.

A glance showed me that the young lady had not accompanied her.

"You are Mr. Pleydell?" she said, holding out her hand to me, and speaking in excellent English.

"Yes," I answered.

"You saw my step-daughter this morning?"

"Yes," I said again.

"I have called to see the house," she continued. "Muriel tells me that it is likely to suit my requirements. Will you show it to me?"

I opened the gates, and we entered a wide carriage-drive. The Rosary had been unlet for some months, and weeds partly covered the avenue. The grounds had a desolate and gloomy appearance, leaves were falling thickly from the trees, and altogether the entire place looked undesirable and neglected.

The Spanish lady, however, seemed delighted with everything. She looked around her with sparkling glances. Flashing her dark eyes into my face, she praised the trees and avenue, the house, and all that the house contained.

She remarked that the rooms were spacious, the lobbies

wide; above all things, the cellars numerous.

"I am particular about the cellars, Mr. Pleydell," she said.

"Indeed!" I answered. "At all events, there are plenty of them."

"Oh, yes! And this one is so large. It will quite suit our purpose. We will turn it into a laboratory."

"My brother and I— Oh, I have not told you about my brother. He is a Spaniard—Señor Merello—he joins us here next week. He and I are scientists, and I hope scientists of no mean order. We have come to England for the purpose of experimenting. In this land of the free we can do what we please. We feel, Mr. Pleydell—you look so sympathizing that I cannot help confiding in you—we feel that we are on the verge of a very great—a very astounding discovery, at which the world, yes, the whole world will wonder. This house is the one of all others for our purpose. When can we take possession, Mr. Pleydell?"

I asked several questions, which were all answered to my satisfaction, and finally returned to town, prepared to draw up a lease by which the house and grounds known as The Rosary, Hampstead Heath, were to be handed over at a very high rent to Mrs. Scaiffe.



"THE SPANISH LADY SEEMED DELIGHTED WITH EVERYTHING."

I felt pleased at the good stroke of business which I had done for a client, and had no apprehensions of any sort. Little did I guess what that afternoon's work would mean to me, and still more to one whom I had ever been proud to call my greatest friend.

Everything went off without a hitch. The Rosary passed into the hands of Mrs. Scaiffe, and also into the hands of her brother, Señor Merello, a tall, dark, very handsome man, bearing all over him the well-known characteristics of a Spanish don.

A week or two went by and the affair had well-nigh passed my memory, when one afternoon I heard eager, excited words in my clerks' room, and the next moment my head clerk entered, followed by the fair-haired English-looking girl who had called herself Muriel Scaiffe.

"I want to speak to you, Mr. Pleydell," she said, in great agitation. "Can I see you alone, and at once?"

"Certainly," I answered. I motioned to the clerk to leave us and helped the young lady to a chair.

"I cannot stay a moment," she began. "Even now I am followed. Mr. Pleydell, he has told me that he knows you; it was on that account I persuaded my step-mother to come to you about a house. You are his greatest friend, for he has said it."

"Of whom are you talking?" I asked, in a bewildered tone.

"Of Oscar Digby!" she replied. "The great traveller, the great discoverer, the greatest, most single-minded, the grandest man of his age. You know him? Yes—yes."

She paused for breath. Her eyes were full of tears.

"Indeed, I do know him," I answered. "He is my very oldest friend. Where is he? What is he doing? Tell me all about him."

She had risen. Her hands were clasped tightly together, her face was white as death.

"He is on his way to England," she answered. "Even now he may have landed. He brings great news, and the moment he sets foot in London he is in danger."

"What do you mean?"

"I cannot tell you what I mean. I dare not. He is your friend, and it is your province to save him."

"But from what, Miss Scaiffe? You have no right to come here and make ambiguous statements. If you come to me at all you ought to be more explicit."

She trembled and now, as though she could not stand any longer, dropped into a chair.

"I am not brave enough to explain things more fully," she said. "I can only repeat my words, 'Your friend is in danger.' Tell him—if you can, if you will—to have nothing to do with us. Keep him, at all risks, away from us. If he mentions us pretend that you do not know anything about us. I would not speak like this if I had not cause—the gravest. When we took The Rosary I did not believe that matters were so awful; indeed, then I was unaware that Mr. Digby was returning to London. But last night I overheard . . . Oh! Mr. Pleydell, I can tell you no more. Pity me and do not question me. Keep Oscar Digby away from The Rosary and, if possible, do not betray me; but if in no other way you can insure his leaving us alone, tell him that I—yes, I, Muriel Scaiffe—wish it. There, I cannot do more."

She was trembling more terribly than ever. She took out her handkerchief to wipe the moisture from her brow.

"I must fly," she said. "If this visit is discovered my life is worth very little."

After she had gone I sat in absolute amazement. My first sensation was that the girl must be mad. Her pallor, her trembling, her vague innuendoes pointed surely to a condition of nerves the reverse of sane. But although the madness of Muriel Scaiffe seemed the most possible solution of her strange visit, I could not cast the thing from my memory. I felt almost needlessly disturbed by it. All day her extraordinary words haunted me, and when, on the next day, Digby, whom I had not seen for years, unexpectedly called, I remembered Miss Scaiffe's visit with a queer and ever-increasing sense of apprehension.

Digby had been away from London for several years. Before he went he and I had shared the same rooms, had gone about together, and had been chums in the fullest sense of the word. It was delightful to see him once again. His hearty, loud laugh fell refreshingly on my ears, and one or two glances into his face removed my fears. After all, it was impossible to associate danger with one so big, so burly, with such immense physical strength. His broad forehead, his keen, frank blue eyes, his smiling mouth, his strong and muscular hands, all denoted strength of mind and body. He looked as if he were muscle all over.

"Well," he said, "here I am, and I have a good deal to tell you. I want your help also, old man. It is your business to introduce me to the most promising and most

enterprising financier of the day. I have it in my power, Pleydell, to make his fortune, and yours, and my own, and half-a-dozen other people's as well."

"Tell me all about it," I said. I sat back in my chair, prepared to enjoy myself.

Oscar was a very noted traveller and thought much of by the Geographical Society.

was the Eldorado of Sir Walter Raleigh's famous expedition in 1615, the failure of which cost him his head."

I could not help laughing.

"This sounds like an old geography lesson. What have you to do with this *terra incognita*?"

He leant forward and dropped his voice.

"Do not think me mad," he said, "for I speak in all sanity. I have found the lost Eldorado!"

"Nonsense!" I cried.

"It is true. I do not mean to say that I have found the mythical city of gold; that, of course, does not exist. But what I have discovered is a spot close to Lake Amacu that is simply laden with gold. The estimates computed on my specimens and reports make it out to be the richest place in the world. The whole thing is, as yet, a close secret, and I have come to London now to put it into the hands of a big financier. A company must be formed with a capital of something like ten millions to work it."

"By Jove!" I cried. "You astonish me."

"The thing will create an enormous sensation," he went on, "and I shall be a millionaire; that is, if the secret does not leak out."

"The secret," I cried.

"Yes, the secret of its exact locality."

"Have you charts?"

"Yes; but those I would rather not disclose, even to you, old man, just yet."

I was silent for a moment, then I said:—

"Horace Lancaster is the biggest financier in the whole of London. He is undoubtedly your man. If you can satisfy him with your reports, charts, and specimens he can float the company. You must see him, Digby."

"Yes, that is what I want," he cried.

"I will telephone to his office at once."

I rang the bell for my clerk and gave him directions.

He left the room. In a few moments he returned with the information that Lancaster was in Paris.

"He won't be back for a week, sir," said the clerk.

He left the room, and I looked at Digby.

"Are you prepared to wait?" I asked.

He shrugged his great shoulders.



"I WANT YOUR HELP ALSO, OLD MAN."

He came nearer to me and dropped his voice a trifle.

"I have made an amazing discovery," he said, "and that is one reason why I have hurried back to London. I do not know whether you are sufficiently conversant with extraordinary and out-of-the-way places on our globe. But anyhow, I may as well tell you that there is a wonderful region, as yet very little known, which lies on the watershed of the Essequibo and Amazon rivers. In that region are situated the old Montes de Cristaes or Crystal Mountains, the disputed boundary between British Guiana and Brazil. There also, according to the legend, was supposed to be the wonderful lost city of Manos. Many expeditions were sent out to discover it in the seventeenth century, and it

"I must, I suppose," he said. "But it is provoking. At any moment another may forestall me. Not that it is likely; but there is always the possibility. Shall we talk over matters to-night, Pleydell? Will you dine with me at my club?"

"With a heart and a half," I answered.

"By the way," continued Digby, "some friends of mine—Brazilians—ought to be in London now: a lady of the name of Scaiffe, with her pretty little step-daughter, an English girl. I should like to introduce you to them. They are remarkably nice people. I had a letter from Mrs. Scaiffe just as I was leaving Brazil telling me that they were *en route* for England and asking me to look her up in town. I wonder where they are? Her brother, too, Señor Merello, is a most charming man. Why, Pleydell, what is the matter?"

I was silent for a moment; then I said: "If I were you I would have nothing to do with these people. I happen to know their whereabouts, and——"

"Well?" he said, opening his eyes in amazement.

"The little girl does not want you to call on them, Digby. Take her advice. She looked true and good." To my astonishment I saw that the big fellow seemed quite upset at my remarks.

"True!" he said, beginning to pace the room. "Of course the little thing is true. I tell you, Pleydell, I am fond of her. Not engaged, or anything of that sort, but I like her. I was looking forward to meeting them. The mother—the step-mother, I mean—is a magnificent woman. I am great friends with her. I was staying at their Quinta last winter. I also know the brother, Señor Merello. Has little Muriel lost her head?"

"She is anxious and frightened. The whole thing seems absurd, of course, but she certainly did beg of me to keep you away from her step-mother, and I half promised to respect her secret and not to tell you the name of the locality where Mrs. Scaiffe and Señor Merello are at present living."

He tried not to look annoyed, but he evidently was so. A few moments later he left me.

That evening Digby and I dined together. We afterwards went exhaustively into the great subject of his discovery. He showed me his specimens and reports, and, in short, so completely fired my enthusiasm that I was all impatience for Lancaster's return. The thing was a big thing, one worth fighting for. We said no more about Mrs. Scaiffe, and I hoped that my friend would not fall into the hands of a woman who, I began to fear, was little better than an adventuress.

Three or four days passed. Lancaster was still detained in Paris, and Digby was evidently eating his heart out with impatience at the unavoidable delay in getting his great scheme floated.

One afternoon he burst noisily into my presence.

"Well," he cried. "The little girl has discovered herself. Talk of women and their pranks! She came to see me at my hotel. She declared that she could not keep away. I just took the little thing in my arms and hugged her. We are going to have a honeymoon when the company is floated, and this evening, Pleydell, I dine at The Rosary.



"I JUST TOOK THE LITTLE THING IN MY ARMS
AND HUGGED HER."

Ha! ha! my friend. I know all about the secret retreat of the Scaiffes by this time. Little Muriel told me herself. I dine there to-night, and they want you to come, too."

I was about to refuse when, as if in a vision, the strange, entreating, suffering face of Muriel Scaiffe, as I had seen it the day she implored me to save my friend, rose up before my eyes. Whatever her present inexplicable conduct might mean, I would go with Digby to-night.

We arrived at The Rosary between seven and eight o'clock. Mrs. Scaiffe received us in Oriental splendour. Her dress was a wonder of magnificence. Diamonds flashed in her raven black hair and glittered round her shapely neck. She was certainly one of the most splendid-looking women I had ever seen, and Digby was not many moments in her company before he was completely subjugated by her charms.

The pale little Muriel looked washed-out and insignificant beside this gorgeous creature. Señor Merello was a masculine edition of his handsome sister: his presence and his wonderful courtly grace of manner seemed but to enhance and accentuate her charms.

At dinner we were served by Spanish servants, and a repulsive-looking negro of the name of Samson stood behind Mrs. Scaiffe's chair.

She was in high spirits, drank freely of champagne, and openly alluded to the great discovery.

"You must show us the chart, my friend," she said.

"No!" he answered, in an emphatic voice. He smiled as he spoke and showed his strong, white teeth.

She bent towards him and whispered something. He glanced at Muriel, whose face was deadly white. Then he rose abruptly.

"As regards anything else, command me," he said; "but not the chart."

Mrs. Scaiffe did not press him further. The ladies went into the drawing-room, and by-and-by Digby and I found ourselves returning to London.

During the journey I mentioned to him that Lancaster had wired to say that he would be at his office and prepared for a meeting on Friday. This was Monday night.

"I am glad to hear that the thing will not be delayed much longer," he answered. "I may as well confess that I am devoured by impatience."

"Your mind will soon be at rest," I replied. "And now, one thing more, old

man. I must talk frankly. I do not like Mrs. Scaiffe—I do not like Señor Merello. As you value all your future, keep that chart out of the hands of those people."

"Am I mad?" he questioned. "The chart is seen by no living soul until I place it in Lancaster's hands. But all the same. Pleydell," he added, "you are prejudiced, Mrs. Scaiffe is one of the best of women."

"Think her so, if you will," I replied; "but, whatever you do, keep your knowledge of your Eldorado to yourself. Remember that on Friday the whole thing will be safe in Lancaster's keeping."

He promised, and I left him.

On Tuesday I saw nothing of Digby.

On Wednesday evening, when I returned home late, I received the following letter:—

I am not mad. I have heavily bribed the kitchen-maid, the only English woman in the whole house, to post this for me. I was forced to call on Mr. Digby and to engage myself to him at any cost. I am now strictly confined to my room under pretence of illness. In reality I am quite well, but a close prisoner. Mr. Digby dined here again last night and, under the influence of a certain drug introduced into his wine, has given away the whole of his discovery *except* the exact locality.

He is to take supper here late to-morrow night (Thursday) and to bring the chart. If he does, he will never leave The Rosary alive. All is prepared. *I speak who know.* Don't betray me, but save him.

The letter fell from my hands. What did it mean? Was Digby's life in danger, or had the girl who wrote to me really gone mad? The letter was without date, without any heading, and without signature. Nevertheless, as I picked it up and read it carefully over again, I was absolutely convinced beyond a shadow of doubt of its truth. Muriel Scaiffe was not mad. She was a victim, to how great an extent I did not dare to think. Another victim, one in even greater danger, was Oscar Digby. I must save him. I must do what the unhappy girl who was a prisoner in that awful house implored of me.

It was late, nearly midnight, but I knew that I had not a moment to lose. I had a friend, a certain Dr. Garland, who had been police surgeon for the Westminster Division for several years. I went immediately to his house in Eaton Square. As I had expected, he was up, and without any preamble I told him the whole long story of the last few weeks.

Finally, I showed him the letter. He heard me without once interrupting. He read the letter without comment. When he folded it up and returned it to me I saw that his keen, clean-shaven face was full of interest. He was silent for several minutes, then he said:—

"I am glad you came to me. This story of yours may mean a very big thing. We have four *primâ-facie* points. *One*: Your friend has this enormously valuable secret about the place in Guiana or on its boundary; a secret which may be worth anything. *Two*: He is very intimate with Mrs. Scaiffe, her step-daughter, and her brother. The intimacy started in Brazil. *Three*: He is engaged to the step-daughter, who evidently is being used as a sort of tool, and is herself in a state of absolute terror, and, so far as one can make out, is not specially in love with Digby nor Digby with her. *Four*: Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother are determined, at any risk, to secure the chart which Digby is to hand to them to-morrow evening. The girl thinks this so important that she has practically risked her life to give you due warning. By the way, when did you say Lancaster would return? Has he made an appointment to see Digby and yourself?"

"Yes; at eleven o'clock on Friday morning."

"Doubtless Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother know of this."

"Probably," I answered. "As far as I can make out they have such power over Digby that he confides everything to them."

"Just so. They have power over him, and they are not scrupulous as to the means they use to force his confidence. If Digby goes to The Rosary to-morrow evening the interview with Lancaster will, in all probability, never take place."

"What do you mean?" I cried, in horror.

"Why, this. Mrs. Scaiffe and Señor Merello are determined to learn Digby's secret. It is necessary for their purpose that they should know the secret and also that they should be the *sole possessors* of it. You see why they want Digby to call on them? They must get his secret from him *before* he sees Lancaster. The chances are that if he gives it up he will never leave the house alive."

"Then, what are we to do?" I asked, for

Garland's meaning stunned me, and I felt incapable of thought or of any mode of action.

"Leave this matter in my hands. I am going immediately to see Inspector Frost. I will communicate with you directly anything serious occurs."

The next morning I called upon Digby and found him breakfasting at his club. He looked worried, and, when I came in, his greeting was scarcely cordial.

"What a solemn face, Pleydell!" he said. "Is anything wrong?" He motioned me to a seat near. I sank into it.

"I want you to come out of town with me," I said. "I can take a day off. Shall we both run down to Brighton? We can return in time for our interview with Lancaster to-morrow."

"It is impossible," he answered. "I should like to come with you, but I have an engagement for to-night."

"Are you going to The Rosary?" I asked.



"THEY HAVE SUCH POWER OVER DIGBY THAT HE CONFIDES EVERYTHING TO THEM."

"I am," he replied, after a moment's pause. "Why, what is the matter?" he added. "I suppose I may consider myself a free agent." There was marked irritation in his tone.

"I wish you would not go," I said.

"Why not?"

"I do not trust the people."

"Folly, Pleydell. In the old days you used not to be so prejudiced."

"I had not the same cause. Digby, if ever people are trying to get you into their hands, they are those people. Have you not already imparted your secret to them?"

"How do you know?" he exclaimed, springing up and turning crimson.

"Well, can you deny it?"

His face paled.

"I don't know that I want to," he said. "Mrs. Scaiffe and Merello will join me in this matter. There is no reason why things should be kept dark from them."

"But is this fair or honourable to Lancaster? Remember, I have already written fully to him. Do, I beg of you, be careful."

"Lancaster cannot object to possible wealthy shareholders," was Digby's answer. "Anyhow," he added, laughing uneasily, "I object to being interfered with. Pray understand that, old man, if we are to continue friends; and now by-bye for the present. We meet at eleven o'clock to-morrow at Lancaster's."

His manner gave me no pretext for remaining longer with him, and I returned to my own work. About five o'clock on that same day a telegram was handed to me which ran as follows:—

Come here at once.—GARLAND.

"I left the house, hailed a hansom, and in a quarter of an hour was shown into Garland's study. He was not alone. A rather tall, grey-haired, grey-moustached, middle-aged man was with him. This man was introduced to me as Inspector Frost.

"Now, Pleydell," said Garland, in his quick, incisive way, "listen to me carefully. The time is short. Inspector Frost and I have not ceased our inquiries since you called on me last night. I must tell you that we believe the affair to be of the most serious kind. Time is too pressing now to enter into all details, but the thing amounts to this. There is the gravest suspicion that Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother, Señor Merello, are employed by a notorious gang in Brazil to force Digby to disclose the exact position of the gold mine. We also know for certain that Mrs. Scaiffe is in constant and close communication with some very suspicious people both in London and in Brazil.

"Now, listen. The crisis is to be to-night. Digby is to take supper at The Rosary, and there to give himself absolutely away. He will take his chart with him; that is the scheme. Digby must not go—that is, if we can possibly prevent him. We expect you to do what you can under the circumstances, but as the case is so serious, and as it is more than probable that Digby will not be persuaded, Inspector Frost and myself and a number of men of his division will surround the house as soon as it becomes dark,

and if Digby should insist on going in every protection in case of difficulty will be given him. The presence of the police will also insure the capture of Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother."

"You mean," I said, "that you will, if necessary, search the house?"

"Yes."

"But how can you do so without a warrant?"

"We have thought of that," said Garland, with a smile. "A magistrate living at Hampstead has been already communicated with. If necessary, one of our men will ride over to his house and procure the requisite instrument to enforce our entrance."

"Very well," I answered; "then I will go at once to Digby's, but I may as well tell you plainly that I have very little hope of dissuading him."

I drove as fast as I could to my friend's rooms, but was greeted with the information that he had already left and was not expected back until late that evening. This was an unlooked-for blow.

I went to his club—he was not there. I then returned to Dr. Garland.

"I failed to find him," I said. "What can be done? Is it possible that he has already gone to his fate?"

"That is scarcely likely," replied Garland, after a pause. "He was invited to supper at The Rosary, and according to your poor young friend's letter the time named was late. There is nothing for it but to waylay him on the grounds before he goes in. You will come with us to-night, will you not, Pleydell?"

"Certainly," I answered.

Garland and I dined together. At half-past nine we left Eaton Square and, punctually at ten o'clock, the hansom we had taken put us down at one of the roads on the north side of the Heath. The large house which I knew so well loomed black in the moonlight.

The night was cold and fresh. The moon was in its second quarter and was shining brightly. Garland and I passed down the dimly-lit lane beside the wall. A tall, dark figure loomed from the darkness and, as it came forward, I saw that it was Inspector Frost.

"Mr. Digby has not arrived yet," he said. "Perhaps, sir," he added, looking at me, "you can even now dissuade him, for it is a bad business. All my men are ready," he continued, "and at a signal the house will be surrounded; but we must have one last try to prevent his entering it. Come this way,

please, sir," he added, beckoning to me to follow him.

We passed out into the road.

"I am absolutely bewildered, inspector," I said to him. "Do you mean to say there is really great danger?"

"The worst I ever knew," was his answer. "You cannot stop a man entering a house if he wishes to; but I can tell you, Mr. Pleydell, I do not believe his life is worth that if he goes in." And the inspector snapped his fingers.

He had scarcely ceased speaking when the jingling of the bells of a hansom sounded behind us. The cab drew up at the gates and Oscar Digby alighted close to us.

Inspector Frost touched him on the shoulder.

He swung round and recognised me.

"Halloa! Pleydell," he said, in no very cordial accents. "What in the name of Heaven are you doing here? What does this mean? Who is this man?"

"I am a police-officer, Mr. Digby, and I want to speak to you. Mr. Pleydell has asked you not to go into that house. You are, of course, free to do as you like, but I must tell you that you are running into great danger. Be advised by me and go away."

For answer Digby thrust his hand into his breast-pocket. He pulled out a note which he gave me.

"Read that, Pleydell," he said; "and receive my answer." I tore the letter from its envelope and read in the moonlight:—

Come to me. I am in danger and suffering. Do not fail me.—MURIEL.

"A hoax! A forgery!" I could not help crying. "For God's sake, Digby, don't be mad."

"Mad or sane, I go into that house," he said. His bright blue eyes flashed with passion and his breath came quickly.

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"Hands off, sir. Don't keep me."

He swung himself away from me.

"One word," called the inspector after him. "How long do you expect to remain?"

"Perhaps an hour. I shall be home by midnight."

"And now, sir, please listen. You can be assured, in case of any trouble, that we are here, and I may further tell you that if you are not out of the house by one o'clock, we shall enter with a search warrant."

Digby stood still for a moment, then he turned to me.

"I cannot but resent your interference, but I believe you mean well. Good-bye!" He



"HE SWUNG HIMSELF AWAY FROM ME."

wrung my hand and walked quickly up the drive.

We watched him ring the bell. The door was opened at once by the negro servant. Digby entered. The door closed silently. Inspector Frost gave a low whistle.

"I would not be that man for a good deal," he said.

Garland came up to us both.

"Is the house entirely surrounded, Frost?" I heard him whisper. Frost smiled, and I

saw his white teeth gleam in the darkness. He waved his hand.

"There is not a space of six feet between man and man," I heard him say; "and now we have nothing to do but to wait and hope for at least an hour and a half. If in an hour's time Mr. Digby does not reappear I shall send a man for the warrant. At one o'clock we enter the house."

Garland and I stood beneath a large fir tree in a dense shade and within the inclosed garden. The minutes seemed to crawl. Our conversation was limited to low whispers at long intervals.

Eleven o'clock chimed on the church clock near by; then half-past sounded on the night air. My ears were strained to catch the expected click of the front door-latch, but it did not come. The house remained wrapt in silence. Once Garland whispered:—

"Hark!" We listened closely. It certainly seemed to me that a dull, muffled sound, as of pounding or hammering, was just audible; but whether it came from the house or not it was impossible to tell.

At a quarter to twelve the one remaining lighted window on the first floor became suddenly dark. Still there was no sign of Digby. Midnight chimed.

Frost said a word to Garland and disappeared, treading softly. He was absent for more than half an hour. When he returned I heard him say:—

"I have got it," and he touched his pocket with his hand as he spoke.

The remaining moments went by in intense anxiety, and, just as the deep boom of one o'clock was heard the inspector laid his hand on my shoulder.

"Come along quietly," he whispered.

Some sign, conveyed by a low whistle, passed from him to his men, and I heard the bushes rustle around us.

The next moment we had ascended the steps, and we could hear the deep whirr of the front door bell as Frost pressed the button.

In less time than we had expected we heard the bolts shot back. The door was

opened on a chain and a black face appeared at the slit.

"Who are you and what do you want?" said a voice.

"I have called for Mr. Digby," said Frost. "Go and tell him that his friend, Mr. Pleydell, and also Doctor Garland want to see him immediately."

A look of blank surprise came over the negro's face.

"But no one of the name of Digby lives here," he said.

"Mrs. Scaiffe lives here," replied the inspector, "and also a Spanish gentleman of the name of Señor Merello. Tell them that I wish to see them immediately, and that I am a police-officer."

A short conversation was evidently taking place within. The next moment the door was flung open, electric lights sprang into being, and my eyes fell upon Mrs. Scaiffe.

She was dressed with her usual magnificence. She came forward with a stately calm and stood silently before us. Her large black eyes were gleaming.

"Well, Mr. Pleydell," she said, speaking in



"SHE CAME FORWARD WITH A STATELY CALM."

an easy voice, "what is the reason of this midnight disturbance? I am always glad to welcome you to my house, but is not the hour a little late?"

Her words were interrupted by Inspector Frost, who held up his hand.

"Your attitude, madam," he said, "is hopeless. We have all come here with a definite object. Mr. Oscar Digby entered this house at a quarter past ten to-night. From that moment the house has been closely surrounded. He is therefore still here."

"Where is your authority for this unwarrantable intrusion?" she said. Her manner changed, her face grew hard as iron. Her whole attitude was one of insolence and defiance.

The inspector immediately produced his warrant.

She glanced over it and uttered a shrill laugh.

"Mr. Digby is not in the house," she said.

She had scarcely spoken before an adjoining door was opened, and Señor Merello, looking gaunt and very white about the face, approached. She looked up at him and smiled, then she said, carelessly:—

"Gentlemen, this is my brother, Señor Merello."

The Señor bowed slightly, but did not speak.

"Once more," said Frost, "where is Mr. Digby?"

"I repeat once more," said Mrs. Scaiffe, "that Mr. Digby is not in this house."

"But we saw him enter at a quarter past ten."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"He is not here now."

"He could not have gone, for the house has been surrounded."

Again she gave her shoulders a shrug. "You have your warrant, gentlemen," she said; "you can look for yourselves."

Frost came up to her.

"I regret to say, madam, that you, this gentleman, and all your servants must consider yourselves under arrest until we find Mr. Oscar Digby."

"That will be for ever, then," she replied; "but please yourselves."

My heart beat with an unwonted sense of terror. What could the woman mean? Digby, either dead or alive, must be in the house.

The operations which followed were conducted rapidly. The establishment, consisting of Mrs. Scaiffe, her brother, two Spanish men-servants, two maids, one of Spanish

extraction, and the negro who had opened the door to us, were summoned and placed in the charge of a police-sergeant.

Muriel Scaiffe was nowhere to be seen.

Then our search of the house began. The rooms on the ground-floor, consisting of the drawing-room, dining-room, and two other big rooms, were fitted up in quite an everyday manner. We did not take much time going through them.

In the basement, the large cellar which had attracted Mrs. Scaiffe's pleased surprise on the day when I took her to see *The Rosary* had now been fitted up as a laboratory. I gazed at it in astonishment. It was evidently intended for the manufacture of chemicals on an almost commercial scale. All the latest chemical and electrical apparatus were to be found there, as well as several large machines, the purposes of which were not evident. One in particular I specially noticed. It was a big tank with a complicated equipment for the manufacture of liquid air in large quantities.

We had no time to give many thoughts to the laboratory just then. A foreboding sense of ever-increasing fear was upon each and all of us. It was sufficient to see that Digby was not there.

Our search in the upper regions was equally unsuccessful. We were just going down stairs again when Frost drew my attention to a door which we had not yet opened. We went to it and found it locked. Putting our strength to work, Garland and I between us burst it open. Within, we found a girl crouching by the bed. She was only partly dressed, and her head was buried in her hands. We went up to her. She turned, saw my face, and suddenly clung to me.

"Have you found him? Is he safe?"

"I do not know, my dear," I answered, trying to soothe her. "We are looking for him. God grant us success."

"Did he come to the house? I have been locked in here all day and heavily drugged. I have only just recovered consciousness and scarcely know what I am doing. Is he in the house?"

"He came in. We are searching for him; we hope to find him."

"That you will never do!" She gave a piercing cry and fell unconscious on the floor.

We placed the unhappy girl on the bed. Garland produced brandy and gave her a few drops; she came to in a couple of minutes and began to moan feebly. We left her,



"WE WENT UP TO HER."

promising to return. We had no time to attend to her just then.

When we reached the hall Frost stood still.

"The man is not here," he muttered.

"But he is here," was Garland's incisive answer. "Inspector, you have got to tear the place to pieces."

The latter nodded.

The inspector's orders were given rapidly, and dawn was just breaking when ten policemen, ordered in from outside, began their systematic search of the entire house from roof to basement.

Pick and crowbar were ruthlessly applied, and never have I seen a house in such a mess. Floorings were torn up and rafters cut through. Broken plaster littered the rooms and lay about on the sumptuous furniture. Walls were pierced and bored through. Closets and cupboards were ransacked. The backs of the fireplaces were torn out and the chimneys explored.

Very little was said as our investigation proceeded, and room after room was checked off.

Finally, an exhaustive examination of the basement and cellars completed our search.

"Well, Dr. Garland, are you satisfied?" asked the inspector.

We had gone back to the garden, and Garland was leaning against a tree, his hands thrust in his pockets and his eyes fixed on the ground. Frost pulled his long moustache and breathed quickly.

"Are you satisfied?" he repeated.

"We must talk sense or we shall all go mad," was Garland's answer. "The thing is absurd, you know. Men don't disappear. Let us work this thing out logically. There are only three planes in space and we know matter is indestructible. If Digby left this house he went up, down, or horizontally. *Up is out of the question.* If he disappeared in a balloon or was shot off the roof he

must have been seen by us, for the house was surrounded. He certainly did not pass through the cordon of men. *He did not go down*, for every cubic foot of basement and cellar has been accounted for, as well as every cubic foot of space in the house.

"So we come to the chemical change of matter, dissipation into gas by heat. There are no furnaces, no ashes, no gas cylinders, nor dynamos, nor carbon points. The time when we lost sight of him to the time of entrance was exactly two hours and three-quarters. There is no way out of it. He is still there."

"He is not there," was the quiet retort of the inspector. "I have sent for the Assistant Commissioner to Scotland Yard, and will ask him to take over the case. It is too much for me."

The tension in all our minds had now reached such a state of strain that we began to fear our own shadows.

Oscar Digby, standing, as it were, on the threshold of a very great future, the hero of a legend worthy of old romance, had suddenly and inexplicably vanished. I could not get my reason to believe that he was not still in the house, for there was not the least doubt that he had not come out. What would happen in the next few hours?

"Is there no secret chamber or secret passage that we have overlooked?" I said, turning to the inspector.

"The walls have been tapped," he replied. "There is not the slightest indication of a

hollow. There are no underground passages. The man is not within these walls."

He now spoke with a certain degree of irritation in his voice which the mystery of the case had evidently awakened in his mind. A few moments later the sound of approaching wheels caused us to turn our heads. A cab drew up at the gates, out of which alighted the well-known form of Sir George Freer.

Garland had already entered the house, and on Sir George appearing on the scene he and I followed him.

We had just advanced across the hall to the room where the members of the household, with the exception of poor Muriel Scaiffe, were still detained, when, to our utter amazement, a long, strange peal of laughter sounded from below. This was followed by another, and again by another. The laughter came from the lips of Garland. We glanced at each other. What on earth did it mean? Together we darted down the stone steps, but before we reached the laboratory another laugh rang out. All hope in me was suddenly changed to a chilling fear, for the laugh was not natural. It had a clanging, metallic sound, without any mirth.

In the centre of the room stood Garland. His mouth was twitching and his breath jerked in and out convulsively.

"What is it? What is the matter?" I cried.

He made no reply, but, pointing to a machine with steel blocks, once more broke into a choking, gurgling laugh which made my flesh creep.

Had he gone mad? Sir George moved swiftly across to him and laid his hand on his shoulder.

"Come, what is all this, Garland?" he said, sternly, though his own face was full of fear.

I knew Garland to be a man of extraordinary self-control, and I could see that he was now holding himself in with all the force at his command.

"It is no use—I cannot tell you," he burst out.

"What—you know what has become of him?"

"Yes."

"You can prove it?"

"Yes."

"Speak out, man."

"He is not here," said Garland.

"Then where is he?"

He flung his hand out towards the Heath, and I saw that the fit was taking him again, but once more he controlled himself. Then he said, in a clear, level voice:—

"He is dead, Sir George, and you can never see his body. You cannot hold an inquest, for there is nothing to hold it on. The winds have taken him and scattered him in dust on the Heath. Don't look at me like



"IN THE CENTRE OF THE ROOM STOOD GARLAND."

that, Pleydell. I am sane, although it is a wonder we are not all mad over this business. Look and listen."

He pointed to the great metal tank.

"I arrived at my present conclusion by a

process of elimination," he began. "Into that tank which contained liquid air Digby, gagged and bound, must have been placed violently, probably after he had given away the chart. Death would have been instantaneous, and he would have been frozen into complete solidity in something like forty minutes. The ordinary laboratory experiment is to freeze a rabbit, which can then be powdered into mortar like any other friable stone. The operation here has been the same. It is only a question of size. Remember, we are dealing with 312deg. below zero Fahrenheit, and then—well, look at this and these."

He pointed to a large machine with steel blocks and to a bench littered with saws, chisels, pestles, and mortars.

"That machine is a stone-breaker," he said. "On the dust adhering to these blocks I found this."

He held up a test tube containing a blue liquid.

"The Guaiacum test," he said. "In other words, blood. This fact taken with the facts we already know, that Digby never left the house; that the only other agent of destruction of a body, fire, is out of the question; that this tank is the receptacle of that enormous machine for making liquid air in very large quantities; and, above all, the practical possibility of the operation being conducted by the men who are at present in the house, afford me absolutely conclusive proof beyond a possibility of doubt as to what has happened. The body of that unfortunate man is as if it had never been, without a fragment of pin-point size for identification or evidence. It is beyond the annals of all the crimes that I have ever heard of. What law can help us? Can you hold an inquest on nothing? Can you charge a person with murder where no victim or trace of a victim can be produced?"

A sickly feeling came over me. Garland's words carried their own conviction, and we knew that we stood in the presence of a horror without a name. Nevertheless, to the police mind horror *per se* does not exist.

To them there is always a mystery, a crime, and a solution. That is all. The men beside me were police once more. Sentiment might come later.

"Are there any reporters here?" asked Sir George.

"None," answered Frost.

"Good. Mr. Oscar Digby has disappeared. There is no doubt how. There can, of course, be no arrest, as Dr. Garland has just said. Our official position is this. We suspect that Mr. Digby has been murdered, but the search for the discovery of the body has failed. That is our position."

Before I left that awful house I made arrangements to have Muriel Scaiffe conveyed to a London hospital. I did not consult Mrs. Scaiffe on the subject. I could not get myself to say another word to the woman. In the hospital a private ward was secured for the unhappy girl, and there for many weeks she hovered between life and death.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother were detained at The Rosary. They were closely watched by the police, and although they made many efforts to escape they found it impossible. Our hope was that when Muriel recovered strength she would be able to substantiate a case against them. But, alas! this hope was unfounded, for, as the girl recovered, there remained a blank in her memory which no efforts on our part could fill. She had absolutely and completely forgotten Oscar Digby, and the house on Hampstead Heath was to her as though it had never existed. In all other respects she was well. Under these circumstances we were forced to allow the Spaniard and his sister to return to their own country, our one most earnest hope being that we might never see or hear of them again.

Meanwhile, Muriel grew better. I was interested in her from the first. When she was well enough I placed her with some friends of my own. A year ago she became my wife. I think she is happy. A past which is forgotten cannot trouble her. I have long ago come to regard her as the best and truest woman living.

A Parlour Séance with David Devant.

By E. T. SACHS.

Author of "Sleight of Hand." From Photos. by George Newnes, Ltd.



THE normal attitude of the public towards the conjurer is that of endeavouring to find him out. In the case of David Devant it has hitherto proved to be an occupation productive of very small result, and, by way of variety, I, personally, have been devoting myself to the task of finding him in. This is not the easy thing it might appear, for, temporarily forsaking the home of magic in Piccadilly, whose mystery-permeated walls are to be replaced by a new building at no great distance of time, David Devant has been occupied in carrying the cult of the occult into the provinces, and along with it the fame of the celebrated Egyptian Hall combination.

I sought out David Devant with a set purpose. On previous occasions this man of many parts had provided delectable amusement for readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, and it occurred to me that the time was ripe for some more. As became one of his vocation, I found David Devant enshrouded in the dim light of his sanctum. In front of him was a spot of greater brightness, and this inspection showed to be a miniature stage, a precise model of the one which our magician employs, with every detail, down to the electric foot-lights, complete. The pigmy rehearsal in progress was that of the new entertainment which David Devant was preparing for his audiences, and which, by this time, will have become familiar throughout the country.

It may be news to the reader to be told that the magician forms the one exception to the world's economic provision which prohibits less gifted mortals from doing two things at once. The Man of Magic not only habitually employs either hand in two separate and distinct occupations, but he will probably have his mind engaged on a third matter in addition. So it did not in the least interfere with Devant's occupation of the moment when I told him the purpose

of my visit. With his head half inside the miniature proscenium he said: "You want something from me for the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE in the shape of easy tricks, without sleight of hand, or with very little? Something that can be done with common objects of everyday use? Ah, I daresay I can manage that, if you give me a few minutes.' He was busy arranging a *cou-lisse* at the exact angle, and, whilst continuing to do this with the left hand, he reached with the right for a match-box,



I.—SHOWING THE MATCH-BOX APPARENTLY EMPTY.

which he handed me with the admonition to empty it of its matches. Whilst this was being done the conjurer's voice was raised in a loud call for "Ernest." "Ernest" is no other than Devant, junior, and he speedily made his appearance out of the gloom, and, for all I could see to the contrary, he might have come through the wall. The youngster was sent to bring a glass of water, and Devant, showing me the match-box empty (Fig. 1), begged me to close it and retain it in my hands. Ernest arriving with the glass of water, a half-crown was

produced, placed in a handkerchief (Fig. 2), and, under its folds, held suspended over the tumbler (Fig. 3). At a given signal the half-crown was allowed to fall into the water, and that it had done so was announced by the jingle it made against the glass. Yet, on the handkerchief being removed by Ernest, no coin was visible in the tumbler. Told to shake the match-box, a rattle betrayed the presence of a solid object inside, and on investigation this proved to be the half-crown.

It may seem impossible that no sleight of hand enters into this trick, but such is the case, a little adroitness being all that is called for. Unknown to the audience, the conjurer has a second half-crown (a florin, penny, or other coin may be used) and an eye-glass of about the same size. When the match-box is being exhibited empty one half-crown is held concealed in the third, fourth, and fifth fingers of the right hand (I presume throughout that the reader is not able to "palm" coins), which is holding the outer cover of the box. Into this cover, on the



2.—PLACING THE COIN IN THE HANDKERCHIEF.

the right hand the eye-glass, this concealment being covered by holding the coin between finger and thumb, the whole being very accurately portrayed in Fig. 2. The handkerchief is thrown over this hand, but the left hand

picks up, not the coin but the eye-glass, the right hand, with the coin held between the first and second joints of the middle finger, being dropped unostentatiously at the side, an early opportunity being taken for transferring the half-crown to the pocket. By putting off the closing of the match-box till now the effect of the illusion is improved.

It is advisable that the eye-glass should fit the bottom of the



3.—THE COIN (IN HANDKERCHIEF) HELD OVER TUMBLER.

tumbler rather closely in order that the performer may pour out the water and hold the tumbler upside down. A champagne tumbler is most suitable for the trick.

In Fig. 3 the reader is shown what is not visible to the spectator, namely, the coin, for which the eye-glass has been substituted, being held between the finger-joints. In actual practice the hand would not be held open in this way, for, of course, the back of it would be presented to the spectator.

In Fig. 1 the half-crown is inside the



4.—COMMENCEMENT OF THE THIMBLE TRICK.

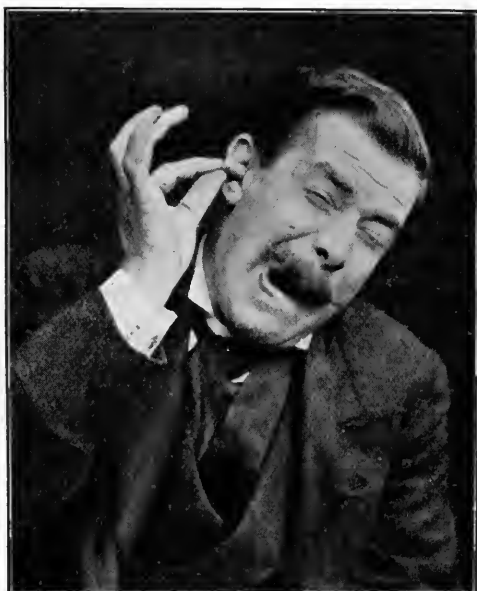
turned round to me he extended towards me his dexter finger.

On the end of it was a thimble. Holding up the backs of his hands as in Fig. 4, he said: "See that? Now, look here. One, two." At "one" he passed the right hand rapidly across the back of the left; at "two" the hand was passed below the other, and lo! the

thimble had become transferred from the first finger of the right hand to the corresponding finger of the left hand. The "one, two" action was repeated and the thimble



5.—SWALLOWING THE THIMBLE.



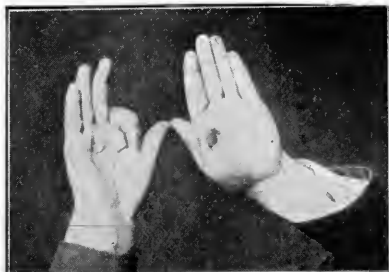
6.—RECOVERING THE THIMBLE.

match-box cover, held in position by the first finger of the right hand, inserted in the cover for the purpose.

"What do you think of that?" asked Devant, immersing himself, as it were, in his stage again, the positions of two delicious little gilded Empire chairs seeming to give him some trouble. I said that the match-box idea was quite new to me, and would prove a stumbling-block to the average intelligence.

When Devant next

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7.—HOW THE THIMBLE TRICK IS DONE.

was back to its original position. After this had been done two or three times the finger with the thimble on it was popped suddenly into the mouth (Fig. 5), and when withdrawn the thimble remained behind. It was recovered by way of the ear (Fig. 6). Just to show how painless the operation was the thimble was put back into the ear, the finger inserted into the mouth again, and when withdrawn there was the thimble on the end.

The secret of the trick is revealed at Fig. 7, the

vanished thimble being concealed at the root of the thumb. The right hand shows the thimble in the act of being concealed; in the left hand the movement has been completed.

In the case of the first sleight (Fig. 4) the performer has two thimbles, one of which is concealed in the left hand at the commencement. In the act of making the "one, two" passes the performer conceals the thimble in the right hand and produces that in the left. If he were to endeavour to do this with the hands quiescent the deception would cease to be such, but under cover of the rapid passes the double movements escape detection.

In Figs. 5 and 6 one thimble only is necessary. The hand, with thimble on finger, is advanced rapidly towards the mouth, which organ makes a gesture strongly significant of an anticipated swallowing, this materially helping the illusion (and no one can say that David Devant is here lacking in appropriate gesture), and when the finger is popped in, the fact that no thimble is upon it will pass absolutely unnoticed. The thimble has, of course, been concealed at the root of the thumb under cover of the advancing movement. After making several gulps suggestive of swallowing, accompanied with pleasurable feelings, the hand is suddenly advanced to the ear, the thimble being brought out on the top of the finger *en route*. Once in the orifice of the ear the tips of finger and thumb are substituted, as in the illustration. When the order is reversed from ear to mouth the thimble is concealed as the hand

is made to approach the ear. The action of pushing in the thimble is simulated (it would not be unnatural for the performer to suffer some agony under the operation), and after the fingers have been shown empty the forefinger is rapidly inserted into the mouth, the thimble being got on to it on the road.

With the facility for concealing the thimble once acquired, as it may be in a short time, the performer may, of course, vary his methods of causing it to disappear and reappear. He will be guided in this by his opportunities.

If Ernest did not show very great interest in the thimble trick it was probably because he had seen it a few times before, but he woke up again when sent for a "bowler" hat and a soda-water tumbler, both "common objects" enough in most households. Each

article having been examined, the tumbler was stood upon the table and on it the hat, crown downwards. Anything less magical than this could scarcely be. However, some pennies were produced, one was marked, and Devant announced that he would throw them into the hat with such effect that the marked coin would penetrate the felt and fall into the glass, the others remaining in the hat. The coins were duly pitched into the hat and, plainly enough, one of them, and one only, was seen to fall into the tumbler (Fig. 8).

The secret of the illusion of the coin passing through the hat, which, I may state, is a very complete one, is thus accomplished. When the performer places the hat on the glass



8.—PASSING A COIN THROUGH A HAT—THE EFFECT.



9.—WHAT THE SPECTATORS DO NOT SEE.

he has, unknown to the spectators, a coin concealed under the hat. Making a little fuss over balancing the hat upon the tumbler he gets the coin into the position shown at Fig. 9, where it will be seen that more of the coin overhangs the inner side of the rim than it does the outer. The tumbler is shown tilted for the convenience of illustration, but very little, if any, tilting is really necessary. Now, if the balance of the hat is suddenly disturbed, its pressure on the coin will be momentarily relieved and the coin will fall into the glass. If more of the coin is outside than inside the rim then it will fall upon the table, and there may be smiles. Such disturbance is brought about if a few coins are thrown smartly into the hat in a very oblique direction, so that, striking it on one side, it is caused to tilt and so release the coin underneath. Care should be taken that the hidden coin is in a direct line with the throw—whether towards or away from the performer does not matter—as the desired result is then more likely to come about.

The concealed coin may be the marked one or an indifferent one. If it is the marked coin then it must necessarily be exchanged for another before the hat is placed in position. As the performer is assumed to be unable to palm the exchange can be effected by commencing the trick by placing the marked coin in a handkerchief and changing it precisely as shown at Fig. 2. The performer then alters his mind, pretending to see an objection to the use of a handkerchief, and takes up the hat, the supposed marked coin (the real Simon Pure now being in the performer's possession) being placed amongst the others. The preliminary changing of the marked coin creates the best effect, because a spectator

may be allowed to lift the hat off the tumbler and take out the coin for identification.

If an unmarked coin be used it follows that the performer must retain possession of the marked one, refraining from throwing it into the hat. He will also be obliged to take the coin out of the tumbler himself and change it for the marked one as he hands it for examination. The following manœuvre for effecting this is successful if executed with dash. With the marked coin concealed in the left hand, the tumbler is seized by the right at the brim in such a way that the fingers can be made to overhang inside to a considerable extent, though no suggestion of such overhanging must be made as the tumbler is seized. The action of pouring the coin out of the tumbler into the left hand is now rapidly executed, the fingers of the right hand momentarily extended as the tumbler is inverted arresting the descent of the coin, and the marked coin that is already in the left hand will appear to have come out of the tumbler.

Devant said he would now show me a

"Davenport Brother" trick, done with some other common objects, viz., a finger-ring and a piece of cord. Ernest, who had been a mute spectator of the preceding trick, keeping strictly to himself any explanation that may have formed itself in his little mind, was dispatched for the cord, and on returning with it was bidden to bind his father's hands together behind his back, as at Fig. 10. Devant taking a seat on a chair, I was told to place my signet-ring between his lips and to state upon which finger of either hand I should like it to appear. I named the little finger of the left hand. Acting on instructions, Ernest brought from the corner a small Japanese folding screen. "When I say 'Right,'



10.—DAVENPORT TRICK FOR THE PARLOUR—THE KNOTS TIED.



11.—THE HANDS AS BEFORE—RING ON FINGER.

take away the screen quickly," said Devant ; and barely was the obstruction in position than "Right" was shouted from behind it. When it was removed there sat Devant, with an innocent look upon his face, having apparently never moved. But the ring was no longer between his lips, and on rising and turning round it was seen to be upon the selected finger, the hands bound as before (Fig. 11).

For the explanation of the trick look at Fig. 12. It will be seen that the performer twists his two hands round his back far enough to enable him to open one of the palms, into which he drops the ring, when it is a simple thing to place it upon the chosen finger. As there is no question of untying the knots, they may be knotted several times over, or sealed, if the spectators desire it ; and the trick possesses a merit which is not an attribute of every illusion, inasmuch as it may be repeated several times without anyone being much wiser.

It will be noticed that the wrists are not bound close together, but in the case of very slim people this can be done. It is merely a question of conformation. A well-developed person should have the wrists tied loosely, or he will not be able to twist his hands round sufficiently far. The careful performer will, of course, experiment in private and learn precisely what he can do and what he cannot.

The model stage had been a good deal neglected, but it was far from being out of Devant's mind, and my attention was directed to it. On a scale of about 1 in 20 I saw before me an exact representation, colour scheme and all, of Devant's fit-up stage, as arranged for Chinese effects. He explained that he would personate a Celestial magician, and in that capacity cover the stage with all manner of strange living things, both beasts of the field and fowls of the air, which will come from nowhere in particular and appear none the worse for it. From the model before me I certainly obtain no glimpse whatever of the secret of this promised production, and being anxious to gather particulars of a few more parlour tricks (not that anyone nowadays confesses to possessing a parlour), I institute no inquiries. On my suggesting that perhaps



12.—THE EXPLANATION.



13.—THE JUMPING CARD—SELECTING THE CARD.

Devant has a card trick to give away, I am asked if I know his jumping card trick. I do not; and as Ernest is fortuitously discovered to have a pack of cards concealed in his blouse (not so very surprising, perhaps, in the presence of a couple of conjurers), facilities are at once afforded for showing it me. "This, you see, is an ordinary pack of cards; take one, Ernest." Ernest, with a display of caution that is no doubt begotten of some experience as an experimental chopping-block, does as required (Fig. 13), notes the denomination of the card, and sees it slowly pushed back into the centre of the pack. I am, of course, acting as referee in this affair, and my conjurer's eye notes that it is indifferent to the performer what card is chosen, nor is it necessary for him to know the name of it. For the sake of effect, however, we are asked the name of the card, which happens to be the eight of clubs. "Now," said Devant, "all I am going to do is to hold the pack in the

fingers and at my word of command the eight of clubs will jump out of the pack. Eight of clubs, jump!" And sure enough it did jump, flying a good 6ft. into the air (Fig. 14). The reader need not be told that the effect is very good indeed.

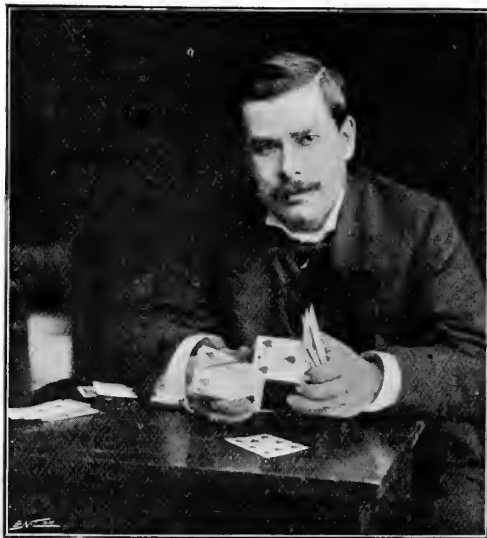
The *deus ex machinâ* is a piece of elastic, or rubber band fastened between two cards, as shown in Fig. 15. In the early stages of the trick these two cards are at the bottom of the pack, and it is an easy matter to prevent the person selecting a card from trying to take either of them, in the very unlikely event of anyone wanting to do so. Whilst the selected card is being looked at the performer carelessly shuffles the pack, thus bringing the two prepared cards to the middle of it, and on the chosen card being



14.—WHAT HO! SHE JUMPS.

returned it is pushed down between the two cards, where it meets the elastic. This, of course, gives to the pressure; and when the card is pressed home the elastic is prevented from reacting by the grip of the hand holding the pack. When the word of command is given the pressure on the outside is relaxed, and the released elastic shoots the card into the air.

A more effective card trick without sleight of hand I do not know, and I say so. "Glad you like it," says Devant. "I have always found it take very well, and it is really quite easy. There are various



15.—DEUS EX MACHINÁ.

immaterial), and these being wetted are placed on the blade of the knife, three on either side.

"Now, watch. I take away two pieces, one from either side" (suited the action to the word—Fig. 16). "You see that the piece on the other side has been removed," saying which the knife is turned over (Fig. 17). "Now I take away two more pieces," and the finger and thumb of the left hand remove the second pair of pieces, each side of the knife

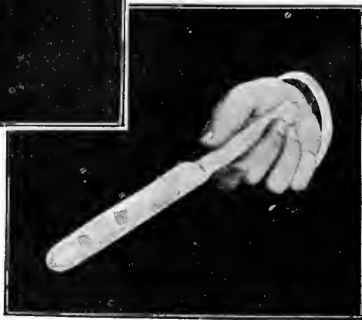
being again shown, with one piece only upon it. Finally, the remaining pieces are removed and the knife-blade shown empty on either side. "To bring all six pieces back again, all I have to do is to wave the knife in the air. Here they are: three at the front and three at the back." (See Fig. 18.)

This very amusing effect is brought about by presenting to the spectator one side of the blade only. Instead of twisting the knife in the thumb and fingers so as to really expose first one side and then the other, the knife is brought round with a rapid semi-circular sweep (towards the performer), starting from the position shown at Fig. 18 and finishing in that of Fig. 17. This sweep need not be either violent or extensive—the quieter and more confined in area the better—and it will produce the effect of the knife being actually

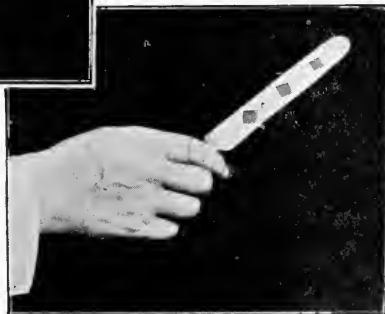


16.—KNIFE-TRICK—REMOVING THE FIRST PIECES OF PAPER.

ways of fixing the elastic between the cards, and the neatest way, I think, is to peel each card, pass the elastic through a slit in the face side, and secure it by pasting the card together again. This makes a very neat job of it, and nothing is given away if the back of either of the prepared cards is exposed. How many tricks have I given you? Five? We must have another to make up the half-dozen, and then I'll show you a little bit of my Chinese magic. Ernest, fetch a cheese-knife." Whilst the knife is being brought Devant cuts up six little squares (or diamonds—the shape is quite



17.—THE KNIFE APPARENTLY TURNED OVER.



18.—THE PAPERS RESTORED—FIRST POSITION OF KNIFE.

turned over. Examination of the three illustrations will show that the same side of the knife is being shown in each instance, the edge always pointing in the same direction.

When the performer professes to remove two pieces, one from each side (Fig. 16), he removes the upper one only, showing the same side of the blade (Fig. 17) to prove that he has removed both. When all six (really three) pieces have been removed the empty side of the blade is shown in the two positions, and when the knife is waved in the air it is simply turned round and the full side shown twice. The

three remaining pieces are then immediately wiped off with the left hand, the trick being over.

We have now our half-dozen tricks, but I am greedy and remind Devant of the custom of giving seven for six in many trades, and he good-naturedly gives me baker's measure with another coin trick. This is one that can be performed anywhere and at any time, so long as four coins of the same denomination are obtainable. Devant gave me no clue as to what he was about to do, but took a coin in each closed hand and directed me to place the other two coins on the outside of the fingers, as in Fig. 19. Resting the knuckles on the table, he gave both hands a sudden jerk, but the two outside coins fell upon the table (Fig. 20). The effect, whatever its intention, had evidently failed, and I was asked to replace the coins again. The jerk was repeated and this time the outside coins disappeared, and on the hands being opened the right hand contained but one coin, three being in the left hand (Fig. 21).

The first jerk is a feint intended to produce the effect of the two outside coins falling to the table. Instead, the two coins in and upon the right hand are thrown upon the table, the one on the left hand being allowed to join the other inside. Thus we get two coins in the left hand, leaving none in the

right. The second attempt, of course, brings one coin into the right hand and three into the left. When the first jerk is made and the two coins fall upon the table the performer must appear slightly disconcerted, as though he had failed in whatever he was attempting, and say,

"Never mind, I will try again, if you will place the coins into position once more. I never can do this trick the first time"; which will be perfectly true.

"Now," said Devant, who, I could see, was keen to turn his attention to his more important work in hand, "come this way and I'll show you some of my Chinese business."

At that moment the bell of the telephone connected with the Egyptian Hall is rung. "Halloa!" Pause. "Yes." Another pause.

"The deuce; of course, I'll come at once. With you in half an hour." Then to me, "Very sorry, old chap, but I must rush off to the hall as fast as a hansom can take me. Maskelyne wants me at once." And that is why I learned nothing about Devant's new business that afternoon. But I think I may say that I came away stored with material for the amusement of many a STRAND reader and his friends on winter evenings. Indeed, I venture to propose a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Devant for his complaisant kindness.



19.—INVISIBLE TRANSIT—THE FIRST POSITION.



20.—POSITION AFTER THE FIRST ATTEMPT.



21.—SUCCESS!

The Wraith of Redscar.

BY BERNARD HAMILTON.



HOSTS! Pooh!" said I, John Sterling, stoutly. "Pooh, sir. I believe that no man has seen a ghost. I've never seen one—and that's good enough for me."

All we men were in the billiard-room of Redscar Tower—a lofty, oak-panelled room, hung round with heraldic escutcheons and stags' antlers. It was after dinner; the ladies had gone to bed. Though most of us were comparative strangers we were all chaffing over a game of "Boer pool"—which variety of the game means that you are allowed to play any mean trick on your opponents that you can. Warm and bright it was within, but cold without—the most biting Christmas Eve I had ever known. A change of wind to the east that afternoon had suddenly frozen up everything, so the scent had failed and we had had a short hunting day. Indeed, it is rather about hunting that I would like to be talking now, for I am a plain man and do not know how to garnish tales with adjectives. So, being readier with rod and gun than pen or pencil, I trust you will excuse all shortcomings. Yet I have had many adventures in my time, and this is certainly not the least curious.

Redscar Tower, in the north, is on the edge of the moors, but it also has a stream and open grass-country on the farther side, so there are hunting, shooting, and fishing all within easy compass. This much my old friend George Lawson had seen when he bought the place a few months before we all came down. We were, in fact, his first house party—and his first Christmas party, too. Indeed, it was practically Lawson's first visit—after the cleaners had been got out of the house.

I may mention that George Lawson and I had been boys together at Rugby; in fact, he had been my fag there. Later in life, although our paths had diverged, we had met sometimes and dined together. So I knew all about his career: how he had made his fortune in the City out of South African mines, and decided to retire while he was yet young enough to enjoy life. I knew George Lawson, too, for a shrewd, practical man; not, perhaps, as downright as I am, but sound—quite sound—especially in his investments. And no better investment

could he have made—from the point of view of a good sportsman—than Redscar Tower.

Certainly it was mighty hard on the young Earl of Dunslair that he had to part with such a place directly he had inherited it, and retire to the main estate of the family in Northumberland. Especially as the Tower had been the favourite shooting-box of the Dunsairs, and they had inhabited it regularly from August to February every season for years out of mind.

But do not misunderstand me. I call the Tower a shooting-box. I call it so on the same principle as London people who build palaces on the Thames or in the Surrey Hills and call them cottages. Redscar is a rambling old Elizabethan hall of the finest type. It is of stone, and ivy-mantled. Court-yards and cone-capped turrets with noisy vanes make it dismal-looking outside, but impressively mediæval. At any rate, a change to George Lawson after Throgmorton Avenue and his dull, respectable house in West Kensington.

But, inside, the Tower of Redscar is really marvellous. Oak, oak—floor, walls, and ceiling—all through the place. Oiled and beeswaxed to a nut-brown colour, it is a more wonderfully preserved wood than that in any mansion of the kind I have seen at home or abroad. The iron-work of the window-panes has each a different pattern; quaint, low-linteled doors lead out of rooms into cabinets, all with irregular recesses in unexpected places. You come suddenly on long corridors, and curtains hiding access to all sorts of little nooks you would never have dreamt of being there. This Christmas Eve was my first night in the house, and, though I am well accustomed to make my way about the world, I had not yet got the hang of it.

Well—as I was saying—we were round the billiard-table. We were chatting idly about the house. I think it was Augustus Brierly—a writer or something—who first started the idea that Redscar Tower was not really complete without a ghost. Now, I hate such nonsense, and I always make a point of putting my foot down heavily on twaddle of that kind, so, as I have said, I remarked: "Pooh!" It may have been rude, but facts are facts, and cannot be too bluntly stated.

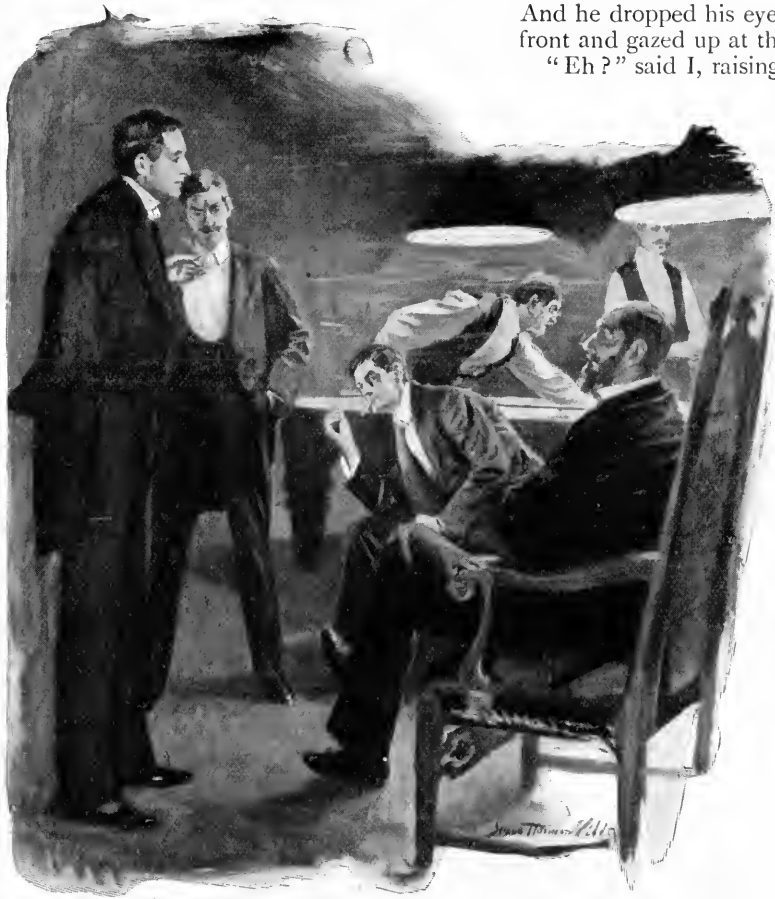
And he dropped his eye-glass on to his shirt-front and gazed up at the ceiling.

"Eh?" said I, raising my voice.

Then our good little host, George Lawson, stepped in. "Do stop that, you fellows," said he; "there's not the slightest reason to grizzle over a thing like that. As a matter of fact, my butler tells me we really have a ghost here. It haunts the tower-room at the end of the west wing."

"What's it like?" said young Wilton, a junior cavalry captain and up to any joke.

"Like!" said Lawson, "how should I know? I've only been in possession a few months. I've had enough to do looking after the workmen without taking to spirits; I'll have the butler up and ask, if you really



"WE WERE CHATTING IDLY ABOUT THE HOUSE."

But I must say Brierly was quite equal to keeping his end up. He had been knocked out of the pool—I had taken two of his "lives"—and was sitting on the lounge with his long legs crossed. He ruffled his hair at what I said, fixed the monocle more firmly in his eye, and glared at me through his window-pane, as if no one had ever dared to speak to him like that before.

"Perhaps," said he, sarcastically, I suppose; "perhaps a robust person like you, Mr. Sterling, does not give credence to the investigations—scientific investigations, let me tell you—of the Society for Psychical Research?"

His general air of lean culture irritated me, I confess.

"No, sir," said I. "I do not give credence to any evidence but that of my own senses."

"Then, sir," said he, "I imagine your range of perception cannot be very extensive."

want to know. He's been with me for years, and I know he'll speak the truth. Anyhow, we've already lost servants by it, and it worries me."

Augustus Brierly got up languidly, with his hands in his pockets; he seemed interested now.

"Send for him, by all means, my dear Lawson," he said. "I'm sure Mr. Sterling would like to hear."

"Oh, certainly, I'd like to hear," said I; "as much as that can do no harm."

So the bell was rung, and after a certain delay (due, no doubt, to disturbing the dignity of his evening leisure) in came the butler.

He was just like scores of other butlers: portly, a little flabby, and the last person in the world to allow his respectable soul to be disturbed by any imaginative dream. So much I had to admit to myself.

We all left the game and gathered round

him ; I should have said there were about half-a-dozen of us—all men from town.

"Locker," said our host, "we want you to tell us all you've heard about the ghost in the tower."

"Yes, sir ; certainly, sir," said the man, promptly. "There isn't much to tell ; but what there is is solemn fact."

"Out with it, then," said George.

"It amounts to this, sir. We did put two maids to sleep in the tower-room, sir, while the cleaning was on. One night I was asleep when, about three o'clock in the morning, as it might be, I was awake by a terrific screeching. Somethin' awful, sir, it was. So I hops out of the room and found the two young females in their nightdresses a-carryin' on awful and rushing about the passages. They did look like ghostesses themselves."

"Yes ; but what did they see ?"

"That I never by rights got to know, sir ; seeing as they went off next morning, swearing they would not stop another night in Redscar. But I heard tell they said there was an awesome white figure, which stood and stooped and glowered and glared at them in bed. As high as the room he was, they said, and when they screeched the white thing disappeared through the wall, wringing his hands at them. That's all I heard, sir. Another girl has gave notice since then, and they do say, sir——"

"Yes, yes, what do they say ?" asked George, quickly.

"I hardly like to tell, sir. It seems unlucky for you, sir——"

"Never mind that."

"They do say, sir, in the village, that it is the Wraith of the old Earl of Dunslair that's come to haunt the tower, sir—because it's passed out of the family which it has been in for hundreds and hundreds of years, sir. They say as how he was a terrible scandalous man in his youth, sir—terrible. And the folks say——"

"Yes, yes, what do they say ?"

"They say that his ghost's come to drive you out of the place, sir. The Earl was that proud of the tower in his lifetime, and kept up such state. And he could never abide strangers."

"Is that all, Locker ?" said Lawson.

"Yes, sir."

"Very well, thank you, you can go ; but don't talk to the other servants."

"No, sir."

As the butler went out a sudden chill fell on all of us. We put our cues on the rack as a matter of course, and gathered sympatheti-

cally round our host. A report like this is no nice thing to get about.

It was all the merest nonsense, of course.

"For God's sake, don't tell my wife," said Lawson, suddenly, and then was silent. But nobody liked to speak for quite a minute.

"It is quite true about the old Earl of Dunslair," said Lawson, at last, again breaking the silence. "He led a wild life and squandered the estate, so that when his grandson succeeded the other day he had to sell. But I heard he died a devout Catholic at last and built the Roman Catholic chapel here in Redscar village."

"But this is quite an excellent opportunity for Mr. Sterling," interposed Brierly, looking at me.

"How ?" said I.

"To test your opinion, to be sure—of the evidence of your senses with regard to visions."

"It is all humbug what the maids saw," said I ; "a waving curtain—or something."

"You don't seem anxious to go and see," said he.

"Really," said I, "I don't know what you mean."

"I mean that, for all you say, you don't like to go and see," said he, quietly.

"You mean that I am afraid ?" said I, now almost angry.

"Oh, if you like to put it in that way," he answered.

"That's soon settled," said I. "Where is the room, George ? Will you let me sleep in it to-night ? It will be a new experience."

"Oh, I wouldn't bother, if I were you," said Lawson, good-naturedly ; although I could see he was a good deal disturbed.

"But I must. I am a man who sticks to his guns ; and Mr. Brierly thinks I am afraid. I insist on going—that is, if you have no objection, George ?"

"Oh, I've no possible objection, of course ; only the tower-room is right away from everyone in this great rambling place ; there's the old furniture in it still—beautiful old stuff. I'll tell them to light a fire in the room, if you really want to try."

"I do," I said, emphatically.

"Then they shall take your things there. Myself, I should be glad enough if you'd lay the old Earl's spectre. I don't want any trouble about servants leaving. If that idea really gets about one never keeps any, and the notion of being a usurper is not pleasant for me in the county."

Certainly it was not a nice thing for Lawson. There was a certain awkwardness about everyone present. As it

was late the other men took their candles and began to make for bed; not, indeed, without some chaff for me. It was then I for the first time realized what I was going to do. And the idea struck me that the men might try to play a practical joke.

"Look here," I said, with my eye especially on Brierly; "look here, don't any of you try any lark; mind you, I intend, if I see that spook, to mark him." And I held up my fist.

"Well," said George, "if it's the old Earl, the more you mark him the better; he was no credit here, for all the time he held the place. Besides, I don't see why any baronial wraith should come and disturb my house when I've paid good money down on it."

"Just you wire in, Sterling," said young Wilton, as he went out and the rest followed, grinning.

But George took me by the arm after they'd all gone. He didn't laugh at all. "Jack," he said, "it's all very well to make a joke of a thing like this. Whether that room is haunted or not it is a horribly, nasty story to get about that I've ousted the old family. One did not like doing it, of course; all the same, they got a fancy price from me. But I don't like it—I don't like it—my butler is no fool. I don't like it at all, I tell you. Have a drop more whisky?"

"No, thanks," I said; "you can't really believe it, George. I'll be off now."

"Wait a minute till I give directions." He rang the bell, and Locker, the butler, appeared.

"Move Mr. Sterling's things yourself to the tower-room; light a fire, and say nothing to anyone."

"Very good, sir."

In twenty minutes the butler returned, saying all was ready.

"Now," said George, "I'll come with you as far as the door."

So we mounted up the state staircase, our footsteps re-echoing on the oak below, above, and around us. We stood for a moment by a great rose-window, looking out on the gardens.

The moon was streaming through it on to the landing—a great full winter moon—crystal, clear. The branches of the big garden trees could be seen silvered with hoar-frost, and the whole quaint outline of the spreading outbuildings was sheeted in white—like a Christmas card. It struck bitter cold on the landing, and as Lawson led me away from contemplating that frosty landscape he told me that the one difficulty he had about the house was the warming of it. The whole place was one mass of wood, he said, and if it should once chance to catch alight nothing could save it; it

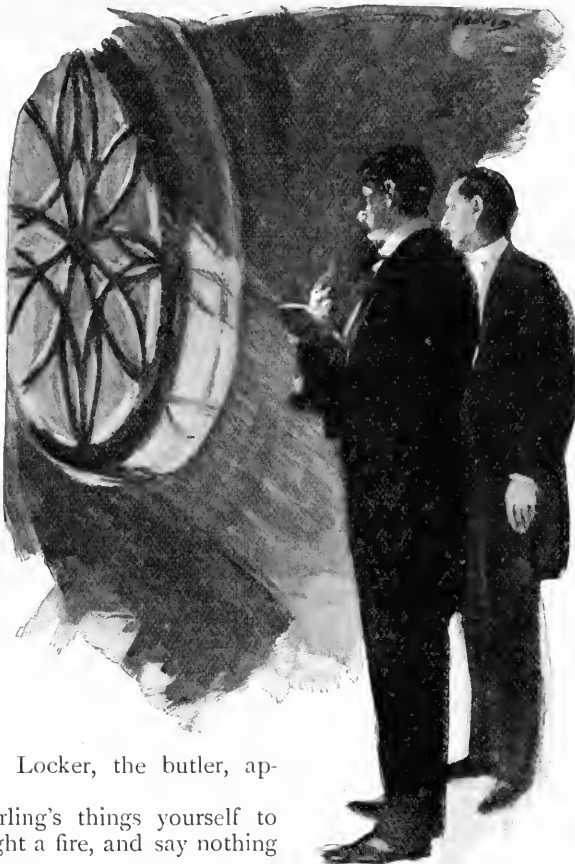
would flare up like a furnace.

"So," he added, as he opened the door of the haunted chamber, "my dear fellow, if you feel nervous, and want to keep a light going, do for goodness' sake be careful of these curtains."

He took hold of the great heavy tapestry curtains which hung round the old four-post bedstead in which I was to sleep.

"You see," he said, "they are Elizabethan. I bought everything right out, furniture and all. Beautiful, isn't it? And exactly suitable to the house."

I looked about me curiously. It



"THE MOON WAS STREAMING THROUGH IT ON TO THE LANDING."

was indeed marvellous furniture, as quaint as the chamber itself. Two great carved oak presses of exquisite finish occupied each side of the room, which being a tower-room was hexagonal. Huge, great cupboards they were, quite 6ft. high. Except for these oak presses, a table, chairs, and the great bed with its hangings, the room was without any modern trumpery ornament; all was solid carving, substantial, grave, and beautiful as the courtly age to which the mediæval designer had belonged. There were no pictures, only an exquisitely carved wooden crucifix hanging on one wall.

The moon was streaming through the diamond panes of the window, which was without a blind. By this light and that of the fire in the great hearth, dimming the glimmer of the candles, one could easily picture men of the old time, with their ruffles and rapiers. A certain oppressive sense of gloom came over me as George bade me "Good-night."

It grew deeper as I turned the key in the lock of the door and heard his footsteps echoing down the long, wooden passage; I knew now that I was alone—utterly alone—at the end of the long wing.

"Suppose I had to call for help," I thought to myself, as I peeled off my coat and lit my pipe. Somehow I began to wish for a novel, just to distract my thoughts.

I rejected that notion as a sign of weakness unworthy of me, and soon tumbled into bed, first carefully putting the candle and matches ready to hand.

I could not sleep, the over-bright moonlight was a great annoyance. So I soon got out and drew the curtains as close as I could over the windows. They did not quite meet, however, and left a broad, brilliant ray of light cutting the dark like a knife. So I drew the thick tapestry curtains of the four-poster all tight round the bed.

Thus I stepped out of the moonlight into perfect darkness at last, when I finally mounted on to the big bed.

"Pooh, what nonsense it all is," I told myself, as I snuggled down into the deep warmth of the feathers. "Ghosts—pooh!"

And so, being healthily tired, I fell asleep like a log.

I awoke.

Something was in my room. I felt it—though I heard nothing. I lay still. The darkness of the curtains of the four-post bed was impenetrable. It was indeed "close-

curtained night." I turned on my back to listen the more intently.

"Nonsense!" I said to myself. "There is nothing there."

"Eh, what was that? Was that a faint moan?"

I must be dreaming. I rubbed my eyes and pinched myself.

There came a long, faint-drawn moan, as of someone in pain.

"By Jove!"

Then came an awesome creak from far down the passage. That was nothing. I knew old houses made all sorts of queer noises at night. Still, I confess I was listening now with all my ears.

I was determined not to give myself away should any of the fellows be going to play some joke upon me. I would not draw a curtain of the bed for the same reason. Then It came again.

"Ooo-aaaa-aaaoohh!"

Then a horrible chuckle—beginning low at first, and going off into a sort of unearthly howl.

I thrilled. I had thought that I might possibly see something, but this grisly sound I did not expect.

Then came that dreadful moan again. There could be no mistake about it—none.

I sat up. I felt buried alive in the curtailed blackness of the antique bed. The Unknown was without.

It might descend upon me at any second.

Then gibber, gibber, gibber, went a patter of low-uttered rubbish—yet so piteous, so weird—just as if a tormented soul from hell was praying to Heaven for salvation.

A chill ran down my backbone. Was this never to end? The air was close; boxed up as I was in the curtains I felt my breath come heavily. Yet, I confess it, I dared not stir to move the hangings to one side. You see, I did not know what might be on the other side.

I fancied, too, that a faint snuffy stench invaded my nostrils. Was it only the musty hangings?

Then I was startled violently by a great sound of "Boom! Boom!! Boom!!!"

It was only the clock of the house striking three. Really my nerves were more shaky than I thought.

And now I seemed to be suddenly growing very cold; a strange breath of air was filtering between the closed curtains of my bed; the hangings seemed to belly and wave horribly towards me. Where on earth could this current of air come from? Was it of earth?

My flesh fairly crept now; I felt like a child—afraid of the dark. There were so many little things—each one of itself of no particular significance, but all taken together full of something portentous of evil—unknown evil occurring in the unknown space in the bedroom outside the black hollow of the four-curtained bed. Though the rest might be imagination or it might not, yet I was sure of this creepy, cold breeze blowing in the room, and the faint moaning of one in agony of remorse. Of those two things I was quite sure; yet I could not stir. I suppose that I, John Sterling, was afraid. Afraid, yes, I was mortally afraid.

"Whish!" came suddenly an unmistakable sound—the sharpening of steel. "Whish," went the blade. "Whish!"—backward and forward.

Then as suddenly as it began the swishing ceased. But what did knife-sharpening mean? Was it to be murder? Murder! This was another idea. Murder!

Still I hesitated, for I had sense enough to remember that if I moved out of that awful blackness of my curtained bed I should be dazzled for a moment by the light outside the bed and at the murderer's mercy.

Suddenly—with incredible swift—that very blackness was torn asunder by invisible hands.

As the curtains rushed away from each

other I fell back on to my pillow, dazzled with the sudden light, and then—aghast.

At the foot of that awful bed framed between the two black wings of the curtains, with wide glistening eyeballs, strands of thin hair standing out from the head like white twisted snakes, and a toothless mouth wide open—all illumined ghastly blue in the light of the moon—a pale apparition glared at me, with such ferocity as seemed to freeze the blood.

The vision stood and stared, and then, with a swift rattle of the rings upon the curtain pole, It drew them back.

I was in a darkness of the coffin again.

Again the gibbering went on. The spirit—if spirit it was; and I was now in no mood to deny it—went yet again whispering round the room, like a lost soul in horrid torment.

Suddenly again, without the slightest warning, the curtains, this time on the left side of my bed—the dark side remote from the moonlight shining through the window—were dashed aside, and,

mopping and mowing at me, that awful white Thing sidled up, horribly moving now this way and now that, as if inviting me to rise. An appearance of skinny fingers kept pawing on the bed-clothes.

I did not move, but I saw now that the Thing's clothes were of antique cut.

Then the curtains dashed together again, as suddenly as they had been drawn.



"A PALE APPARITION GLARED AT ME."

The tale of the old Earl coming back to haunt his old room and to destroy the present tenants of Redscar flashed across me. Could this be the Wraith of the wicked Lord of Dunslair? The whittling sound of a knife, the attempt to make me rise, the bitter cold, all stung me into the feeling that some life and death struggle was surely imminent. Would the apparition come again? Next time I must be ready.

I withdrew myself from my shrinking posture on the pillow and crouched low in the centre of the great black bed; for if that Thing came again I knew not from which side it would come.

So I crouched, shivering with cold, in my night-shirt, determined to make an effort if, for the third time, the vision should appear.

I had not long to wait.

"Swoop!" Back went the curtains on the third side of my bed—this time the side next the mullioned window through which the moonlight was streaming.

But there was nothing there.

I gazed, I confess, in horror at—vacancy. Then slowly, and with an unspeakable horror, lean, long talons began to scrabble at the bed-clothes; the same dread head began to rise above the level of the bed, with its horrific hair and glistening eyeballs. No body showed—only the head and horrid hands appeared, dragging at the coverlet.

Frozen with terror I could wait for no more. With frantic strength I shot my clenched fist full into the dreadful face.

My knuckles seemed to go into something pulpy soft. There came a long-drawn, whining howl. I sprang up in bed and saw a figure, crouching on all-fours, move quickly to the dark wall under the window. I seized my match-box and struck, dropping the lighted match on the bed-clothes. In that second George's warning about fire

came to me. I dashed out my hand and pressed out the burning light.

As I did so I looked up and saw that white horror standing right up, grisly in the deep shadow. I struck another match and lit the candle.

The Wraith had vanished utterly.

I leapt out of bed and dashed to the wall where I had last seen it. There was nothing there.

My fingers touched hard stone. I turned to the huge press and looked in; there was nothing there.

I prowled, liked a caged beast, about the room, searching up and down. There was nothing there.

And now, strange to say, the room seemed less cold.



"I SAW A FIGURE CROUCHING ON ALL-FOURS."

I rattled at the door—that was fast ; all the windows—so were they. I went tapping round the room. There was nothing by which anyone could have entered or escaped.

Nothing.

And then a reactionary feeling of deadly nausea came upon me ; worse, if anything, than what I had passed through. It must, it must in very truth, it *must* have been the spirit of that old Earl. What else could it have been ? The old Earl in his spirit shape, yearning for vengeance.

For the first time in my life I saw that departed spirits must exist. That frightful apparition ; the mysterious cold ; the utter disappearance. How else could it be accounted for ?

I crept back to bed to cogitate. As I hugged myself under the sheets I could not, try as I would, account for this under any other hypothesis than the supernatural. But I almost laughed with pure relief from the tension. Yet, if it were so, how was I to face Mr. Augustus Brierly in the morning ?

I should have to confess myself wrong, in spite of my confident statement of the night before. That would be a bitter pill, but anything was better than that which I had just passed through.

Moreover, I did not see how any of the other men could possibly have hoaxed me over the matter. At any rate, I had left my mark on one of them if he had.

Then, mostly from bravado, I'm afraid, I tried to get to sleep. It was no use, of course, so I got up. For hours I paced the room back and fro, determined to be ready should the Wraith return. And this, until morning broke. Then I returned into bed to save appearances.

The butler, coming in to take my clothes to brush, drew my curtains and let in the bright light about me. Even the steam of the hot shaving-water seemed to bring me back to life again as, at last, I sat up in bed in fair daylight. The butler looked curious, but was discreetly silent—as is the manner of butlers.

Had the last night's experience been all a bad dream ? No, I was sure that it had not. But at breakfast I should have to meet all the men. If I told truthfully what I had seen I was bound to be unmercifully chaffed. That would not be pleasant, nor the condescending sneer of Brierly. Yet, by Jove, it had been weird. If there ever was a ghost that was one. Should I be honest and bear the brunt, or should I deny that I had seen anything ? It was a temptation for a moment,

I confess ; yet I have always been a down-right nian, and object altogether to crooked ways of dealing. Yes, I had to face it out.

I was slow in dressing, but slower still perhaps to recognise that the reason was that my hand was a bit shaky. Could it be possible that I, who was, as a rule, as steady as a rock, had had my nerves shaken so much as that ? Moreover, the feeling of awe would not leave me.

When I finally got down to the breakfast-room I was greeted with curious glances, but as the ladies and servants were present no one alluded to the matter.

After breakfast most of the men managed to stroll after me into the gun-room, on one excuse or another.

"A bit white about the gills, Sterling, I think !" said young Wilton.

"Chippy—distinctly chippy !" chimed in another youngster.

"Did you sleep much last night ?" asked Brierly, with unnecessary politeness.

"Never mind those fellows. Have a pick-me-up—a whisky-and-soda or a pint of champagne ?" said Lawson, hospitably.

By Jove ! was I as bad as that ? I never thought I could have actually shown anything in my face. I strolled over to a mirror and took a steady look at myself. Yes ; I was pale and baggy enough under the eyes, in all conscience.

"No, thanks, George," I said. "There's nothing much the matter."

"Well, have you seen anything ?" said Brierly, after a short silence. He was evidently unable to restrain his impatience.

I gazed round the party, scrutinizing each face carefully to see if I could observe marks of the blow that I had given my nocturnal visitor. All were smart and debonair as could be ; never a sign of anything. I felt nonplussed.

"We're all waiting, Jack," said Lawson, good-naturedly.

"Well," said I, deliberately, just to keep them on tip-toe. "Well, I *have* !"

Brierly's eyes positively blazed with triumph ; the others laughed, tentatively.

George looked annoyed and a bit anxious, I thought.

"Won't you tell us ?" he said.

I could not resist this, so I at once told them all the tale, omitting nothing.

Then Mrs. Lawson happened to call for her husband to go out ; the others had to follow. I was left alone with Brierly.

"You confess then," said he, slowly, "that you cannot account for this vision ?"

"Yes," said I. "I confess that I cannot account for it."

"Won't you acknowledge that the presence was preternatural?" he went on.

"I've told you what I saw; that is enough," said I, shortly.

"You *saw*, you say? You did more than see. Look! it is hard to have a clearer case. There was no clairvoyant or medium to conjure up tricks. Observe, too, that you had never slept in the room before; that no one but ourselves, and that only at a late hour—too late to play a trick, even if it had been the intention of any of us—knew that you were going to occupy that room; and above all, that it can be the object of no living creature to visit that room in the manner you have described."

"That is all true," said I.

"Well; let us go on," said he. Now that he was interested in his demonstration he dropped his pedantic air; indeed, he became so natural that I really began to like him.

"So far, then," he said, "we have established that it is next door to impossible that it can be any trick; it is equally impossible that burglary can have been the object. For you found nothing disturbed."

"That is true," said I; "except that I couldn't find my razors, at first."

"I think, then, we can dismiss entirely the question of there being any rational object in any man so disturbing you," he said.

"Yes," I answered. "No man in his senses could have done just what that—that appearance—did."

"Well, it is not likely that any man out of

his senses could have done it," said he, smiling.

"No, certainly not," I answered.

"There," said he, "that is what I will call our 'negative' case. If what you saw was a man, he must have had some reason for his action; so far as we can either of us see, there can be no possible motive for any *man* so acting; that is one point in favour of its being really the manifestation of a *spirit*."

"Yes," I answered, for his argument was growing upon me. Indeed, it was unanswerable.

"Well," he went on,

"let us now look upon it from the point of view of the evidence of your senses. And," he added, "you said you would believe in ghosts if you had the evidence of your senses?"

"Ah," said I, "if you can convince me there, I am quite your convert."

"Well, now, let us consider all your senses in turn; not one, mark you, which is generally considered sufficient evidence by most

"I'VE TOLD YOU WHAT I SAW."

people. Many people who see something filmy-white floating in the dark at a *séance* are convinced mostly by their own imagination. But let us take all your senses—one by one—and see how they react the one upon the other. First, the most obvious sense—the sense of sight. You saw the creature—let me see—three times distinctly—with an interval of intense horror between each vision?"

"Distinctly, utterly distinctly, I saw it," I answered. "I could swear to each time as a separate fact, although I don't mind saying I am a bit nervous of ridicule."

"Don't, I beg, fear that I shall laugh at you over this matter. Far from it. Every case has to be taken on its own merits. If I have hitherto appeared perhaps a little rude,



you must forgive me. There are cases which have come under my experience which are quite inexplicable—and this one seems at present likely to rank with them. Some things yield to investigation; some do not. My province is only to examine and to classify. I confess this affair interests me extremely. For I have no doubt of your good faith."

"I should hope not," I said.

"You must pardon me again. I was only speaking as a scientific observer, whose entire aim is accuracy. I meant by saying that I did not doubt your good faith that a big, six-foot, healthy man like you is not one who is subject to hallucinations or nervous fits—that, in fact, you are totally prejudiced against anything in the way of psychical phenomena."

"No one more so," I answered, mollified.

"Well, to return to your sense of sight: you have never had any hallucinations of any kind in your life?"

"None whatever."

"Yet you saw the apparition three distinct times, with distinct intervals, in which you could think dispassionately between each vision?"

"Yes."

"So much then for the evidence of your sense of sight—enough alone to convince nine people out of ten. Now for your sense of hearing. You heard gibberings and piteous moans?"

"Distinctly."

"You heard the sharpening of steel—you are sure of that?"

"Quite sure."

"Did you hear nothing more?"

"Only the rattle of the curtain-rings when the curtains were drawn asunder, and a sort of indistinct shuffling and rustle."

"Ha! that is a curious point. But did you hear nothing when the apparition disappeared?"

"Nothing."

"Quite sure?"

"Nothing at all."

"So now," he said, "see what we have got so far. A nearly absolutely negative case, and your sense of hearing confirming your sense of sight. Now, of your sense of smell! Did you smell anything?"

"Yes, a faint odour—musty and sickly—not unpleasant. I think, but I am not sure, that it might have been the smell of the bedroom."

"That is all?"

"That is all."

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"Of tasting, of course, you had no opportunity. Now, lastly, of your sense of feeling?"

"Oh, feeling!" said I; "the wraith felt me more than I felt him. I'll wager that."

"Very possibly—but what exactly did you feel?"

"When I hit I felt a yielding, pulpy, soft thing—that might have been an ordinary face, and might not; it had no resistance in it worth mentioning. But I was not at close quarters, and so I could not feel the full force of my own blow."

"Possibly it was a fully materialized psychic body. But what do you think of it all yourself?"

"I confess, now, that—that I must be convinced it was really a spirit."

"I wonder if we could examine the room," said he.

"I did examine it," I said.

"This morning?"

"No, not this morning."

"Well, let us go and examine it now."

"I think," I said, "we'd better, perhaps, wait for Lawson's permission. I know he is very upset about the whole thing, and it would be as well not to cause any commotion among the servants, unless he knows."

"You are right, no doubt; we'll wait till lunch, and ask him then. Meanwhile, let's go and look at the outside of the tower to see if there is any way of getting in. There may be some footmarks."

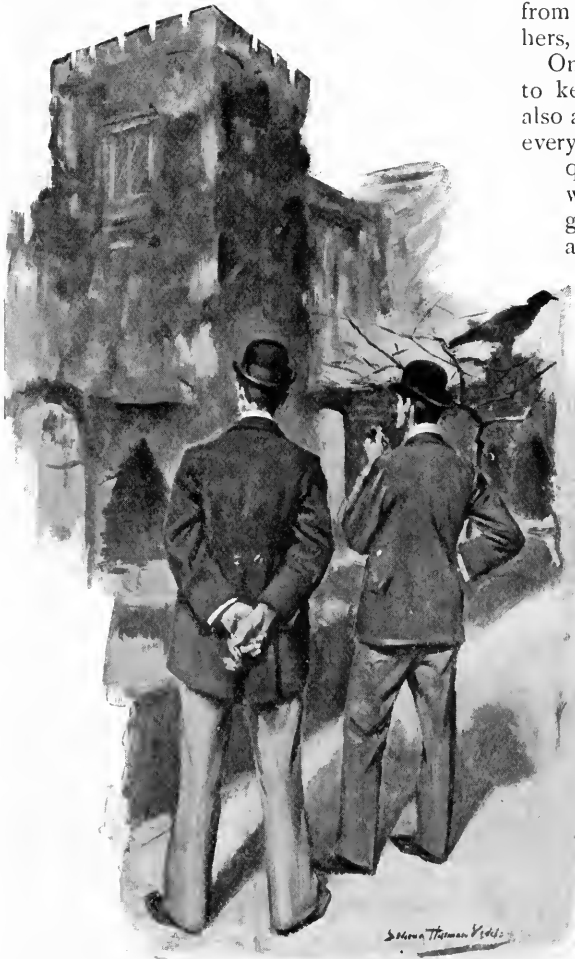
So we lit our pipes and strolled round to the big, old-fashioned garden.

When we reached the tower we saw that it was ivy-mantled and with not a vestige of a door in it. We looked around the base of the tower in every direction, to see if there were traces of anything in the way of footmarks. The ground was still quite hard from the frost. But the sun having been up some time the white hoar had thawed off from the grass; there was no trace of any footmark to be seen.

Gradually the whole significance of the thing was eating itself into me. There was nothing, simply nothing, to show that what I had seen was not supernatural. Indeed, everything seemed to point to the fact that I had at last to acknowledge that I had seen—a Ghost!

At last I had no doubt. Worse; I was fairly feverish over it.

Then Brierly, quite rationally, began to relate to me several of the instances of similar things which had come under his observation—things which would bear no explanation.



"WE LOOKED AROUND THE BASE OF THE TOWER IN EVERY DIRECTION."

We passed the morning so talking ; I felt too upset to do anything else. For I had little confidence in Brierly finding out anything from the room. Notwithstanding my agitation on the previous night, I felt that I had made a very sufficient search.

At last the lunch-bell rang, and we went in to the social meal ; all us men with a secret between us, which made us bad companions for the ladies, I fear.

After lunch Lawson, Brierly, and I adjourned again to the billiard-room for a consultation. George, figuratively speaking, took the chair.

"Look here," he said, "we must go slow and lay this ghost, if it can be laid."

Then we fell into a longish talk. At last it was arranged that Lawson and I should occupy the haunted room jointly on that night. He was quite sure he could get away

from his room without disturbing his wife in hers, as the dressing-room was between.

One of us was to be in bed and the other to keep watch, concealed somewhere. We also arranged that we would not go up until everybody was in bed. Then came the question as to what further precautions we should take. George Lawson suggested revolvers, but that I said was absurd ; heavy sticks were quite sufficient for all our purpose.

That evening it seemed a long dinner enough, and the game at pool afterwards dragged terribly, although we let the other men into the secret. When the ladies retired Lawson began to make scouting excursions towards the servants' quarters, to see if they showed any signs of retiring. Of course they seemed to stay up longer than usual. Then all the other guests went off to bed, while George and I engaged each other at pyramids.

At last the butler came in to know if anything further was wanted, and was told to go to bed.

After a decent interval, having made quite sure that everyone was in their rooms, I walked off with my candle to my haunted chamber, with Lawson following silently behind in his stocking feet.

We entered the room. Again the moonlight was streaming through the window. We had already determined to allow it to do so, so as to have as much light as possible on the situation. We had also arranged

that I, being the bigger man, should be held in reserve and in hiding, while George Lawson was this time to be the victim in the bed.

So, having carefully rattled at the windows to see that they were secure and so on, we finally ensconced ourselves—George in the bed with the curtains drawn, and I in the huge oak cupboard, but with the door slightly ajar. I sat on a stool inside with my eye fixed upon the room so that I could see nearly all that might pass, without myself being observed.

For the first hour the waiting was simply deathly dull. Lawson soon began to snore in good earnest ; I envied him in bed while I sat, getting colder and colder, as the fire died down in the hearth. I leaned back in the cupboard and tried to make myself as comfortable as I could in my cramped position.

I had been sitting so for nearly two hours, listening to the contented breathing of the somnolent George, when, half-asleep as I was, I suddenly felt a cold breath of air stir on my cheek. And in the same instant came a crash and I tumbled back headlong—into a black abyss!

Candidly, I felt for a moment as if I was killed.

I was in absolute blackness, on my back, head down, and where I had no idea.

But I had fallen "soft." And suddenly as I lay—with my head much lower than my feet—I felt something move under me.

Thank God, it was flesh and blood—a real man.

Instantly all my senses returned. I knew then that I was in some kind of well-like passage, communicating with the room, or a flight of stairs coming up into it.

Something groaned a little and moved under me. I found I was not really hurt, except for a slight contusion. So I turned at once and gripped the man lying inert under me.

Then, as I had him in my grasp, I saw George standing in the aperture above showing a light; he was asking if I was hurt.

I answered, "Not a bit," and, gripping our visitor, lifted him a little—he was passive as a child. Then I took him up bodily and stumbled up the stair again to the chamber. It was my ghostly old man, sure enough—a phantom of flesh in a white serving-man's livery, and more frightened than hurt.

"Cheer up, George," I said. "There is your family spectre." And plumped my burden into a chair.

There sat the Wraith, with both arms hanging

straight down, for all the world like an automaton which had run down. He sat there, staring at us both, with eyes wide open and jaw dropped on his neck. His tangled white hair and lean face looked in the moonlight sufficiently ghastly for any spirit.

But the old fellow uttered no word—only moved his head from side to side, in a silly way, craning his skinny neck, first at one of us then at the other.

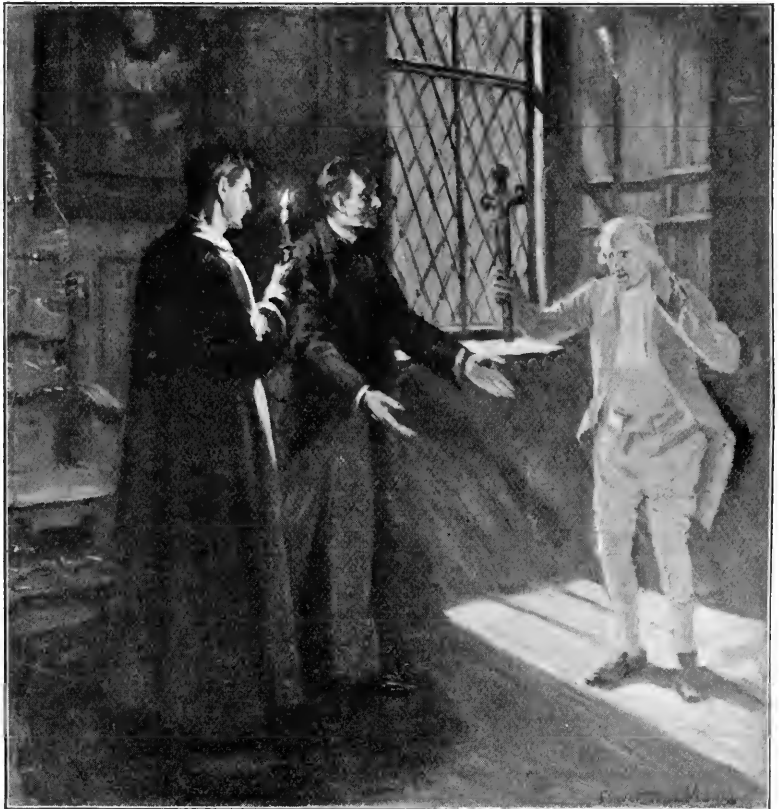
At last I clapped him on the shoulder. He jumped all over.

Then with a shriek he leapt like a goat from the chair and dashed at the wall. He snatched down the wooden crucifix from it and held it before him, standing erect. Then he kept thrusting it forward at us, as if we were evil things to be banned.

This seemed to me to be a bit reversing the proper order of affairs, so I asked him who he was.

A gasp was all the answer.

"We won't hurt you," Lawson said; "we are as good Christians as yourself. You can put the crucifix down; you see it has no terrors for us."



"HE KEPT THRUSTING IT FORWARD AT US."

This seemed to pacify him. He replaced the cross with the most scrupulous reverence on the wall; then bent his knee before it and crossed himself.

"You are a good Catholic, evidently," said I. "Now tell me what you are doing here."

By now Lawson had brought his candle close to the old face.

"By Jove! it's ——" he said, when the old fellow suddenly broke into a low whine.

"Where is my lord? This is my lord's room," he said. "His lordship cannot see ye now, sorrs."

"No, no," said Lawson, motioning me to keep silence; "you are Larry Maguire. This is my house now. Lord Dunslair is dead; you know that. I am Mr. Lawson. I have bought Redscar."

In an instant the old fellow's face seemed to change; he passed his hand across his forehead.

"Whisht!" he said, "'tis true it is, then? Me lord's with the saints, sure he is. Yes, yes, I know now, I know. Yes, but who are ye?" he asked, humbly.

"I? I tell you I am Mr. Lawson. I am master here now. What are you doing in my house, Larry?"

"You are master—master here now?"

"But who are you?" I asked, impatiently.

"Is it me? Everyone knows me. I am old Larry Maguire that does no harm." Then the old fellow began to whimper.

"But what are you doing here at this time of night, Larry?" said George.

"Whisht, sorr, I cannot come in the day at all—by reason of the new people. Bridget stays me coming in the day. Sure, I come just when I can slip out. To wake my lord and dress him entirely, and just to say a prayer by the Holy Cross here—the wood of the True Cross it is, that they brought here years gone by." And the old man turned again to the crucifix and crossed himself devoutly.

"But why don't you come by the proper door?" said Lawson.

"Eh? Ye would be clever, now," he responded, with a shaking finger and every symptom of senile cunning. "Sure, Bridget will not let me come by the door; so I come by the way no one but me and the master knew. Arrah, and now there be bad spirits of evil here—bad spirits." And he put his hand up, feelingly, to his face, where I had hit him the previous night.

"Where do you live?" said I, my curiosity again getting the better of me.

"Whisht! Where do I live? 'Tis at Redscar I live entirely."

Then the old fellow began to blether to himself—we knew all we wanted from him now.

"Come," said George, taking up the candle. "We'll just explore this passage of yours, Larry."

And so, leaving our old Wraith to croon and maunder to himself, we stepped down the stair.

As I passed out of the room I saw that the back of the big cupboard in which I had been hidden concealed the door of the secret passage and opened into it. Certainly it had sounded hollow when I had tapped it before, but evidently not of the hollowness of the vacancy behind it—rather with the echo made within the massive cupboard itself. Doubtless, also, it was this door which when opened had made me feel a cold breeze.

The passage led right through the solid thickness of the wall for quite a long distance.

At first, by a flight of steps we descended to the level of the ground-floor. Then the passage twisted at a right angle, and at last we came to a door quite a long way from the tower chamber; this was on the latch. Lawson was first; as he walked through his candle-flame blew out, so I could see nothing, but I heard strong language from George.

"Confound the place!" he said. "I've walked straight into a bramble bush."

We lit the light again and beheld the growth of tens of years about the door—a little, insignificant door—which, in the huge block of buildings of which the rambling house consisted, might—and did—easily escape the notice of anyone.

"Well," said George Lawson, when we'd run the last of the passage into the open, "it seems we've been 'had,' after all. Poor old Larry; the old Earl's Irish valet he was, a daft old chap who wears the old livery on occasions of ceremony as his right. It was he who wanted to wake you and sharpened your razors. To think we were scared by old Larry. He sometimes has bad demented fits, but his daughter keeps a good hand upon him. He does the verger work at the Catholic chapel all right; so no one has the heart to shut him up—a harmless lunatic, my dear Sterling—a harmless lunatic, like some others, I think."

"Yes," said I, grinning; "but it's bad for Brierly. I score after all."

Edwin's Razor.

BY ANGELINA BROWN.

WHEN Edwin went away from home a few weeks ago, leaving what he calls his "pet" razor behind him, I for the first time grasped the beneficent wisdom of Nature in growing whiskers on men's faces.

For me, a young wife, that razor smoothed the way out of many difficulties, and helped me to realize that the family cutlery - case is stale, flat, and unprofitable when certain little household duties requiring a really sharp instrument are to be successfully carried out.

It was by the merest accident that I discovered the virtues of a razor. I wanted to cut some buttons off one of baby's garments. The razor was lying upon the dressing-table, and there was nothing else handy, so I used it for the purpose named, and with such success that I determined in future to use it whenever I could in preference to a pair of scissors or an ordinary penknife. I was simply charmed with it. The buttons seemed to fall off as if by magic when I put the least pressure on the razor.

Next day I was



"THE BUTTONS SEEMED TO FALL OFF AS IF BY MAGIC."

satisfactory marmalade, with the fruit in nice, thin shavings, to use her husband's razor for the purpose. The marmalade is always ever so much nicer than when an ordinary table-knife is used.

The same afternoon I happened to be in the box-room. For a long time I had been hoping to spare the necessary hour or two in which to scrape off the dirty old Continental labels which had remained on Eddie's and my own boxes since our happy, happy honeymoon. You know how these nasty labels disfigure nice and otherwise unsoiled travelling chests and portmanteaus? Which was the best way of removing them? Like a message from Heaven came the idea to my brain: "Eddie's razor!"

Soon the paper shavings were flying in all directions



"THE TIME SAVED IN SLICING THE ORANGES AND LEMONS WAS WONDERFUL."

about the room. It was so nice and pleasant just to place the sharp edge of the razor beneath the side of each label, and then with a brisk whisk to, as it were, shave the label from the box. Some of those labels, I confess, were so tightly fixed to the canvas and leather that I had in a few cases to use a good deal of force in cutting them away, but Eddie's razor robbed the job of half its tiresomeness, and presently our beautiful boxes and portmanteaus were quite free from the ugly, dirty bits of coloured paper, which were always an eyesore to me when I entered our little box-room.

Another thing which I should advise young and old wives to do. When you want a pencil sharpened, don't use your penknife



"WHEN YOU WANT A PENCIL SHARPENED, DON'T USE YOUR PENKNIFE."

—that is nearly always blunt, and one can't sharpen a pencil properly with a blunt knife. During Eddie's absence from home I never used anything else but his razor when I wanted a pencil very sharp and smoothly pointed. It was quite a pleasure to use that pencil, I assure you. Mrs. Williams, my neighbour, was so charmed with my pencil on an occasion which arose when we were enjoying afternoon tea in my drawing-room, that I insisted on sharpening her own pencil with Eddie's razor, and she was ever so grateful.

As for cutting geranium-slips ! You might



"SOON THE PAPER SHAVINGS WERE FLYING IN ALL DIRECTIONS."

search the wide world over and you could not possibly have a better thing for cutting geranium-slips than your husband's razor ! It was quite a pleasure, I assure you, to get hold of a big geranium in my left hand, and with Eddie's "pet" razor in my right hand lop off cutting after cutting. Not the slightest exertion seemed necessary, the blade of the razor went through the stalks just as though they were warm butter. And in the same way I found the razor a most admirable



"I FOUND THE RAZOR A MOST ADMIRABLE THING FOR CHOPPING UP THE MOULD."

thing for chopping up the mould to make it nice and fine before transplanting the slips into it. I feel positive that, owing to being so cleanly slipped and with the mould so beautifully fine, our geraniums next year will be bound to surpass anything ever seen before in this neighbourhood.

How I got hold of the excellent idea of chopping up the mould with Eddie's pet razor was this: A few



"I MADE SHORT WORK OF THE SUET."



"I WAS MOST CAREFUL TO GIVE IT A RUB ON THE KNIFE-BOARD."

days previously I was rather hurried in preparing the pudding for dinner. I always make the sweets myself, as servants are not always to be trusted at such work; and I found the knife I was using in cutting up the suet, etc., rather blunt. Of course, I thought of Eddie's

razor immediately, and, getting hold of that, I made short work of the suet. I was most careful, when it had done what I required of it, to wipe the grease from it and give it a rub on the knife-board.

For cutting up old clothes, or re-making a skirt, I find nothing can beat Eddie's razor. You simply take the skirt in one hand, with the seams running in a line from between the finger and thumb. Take the razor and place its edge on the seam to be divided. The cloth will almost seem to separate

of its own accord, and you will be saved an immense amount of time and trouble.

One day I was out shopping and, the rain coming on unexpectedly, my patent leather shoes became caked with mud. Could I trust such a delicate operation as the removal of caked mud from my beautiful patent leather shoes to Mary Anne? Certainly not! Eddie's razor acted superbly in saving my shoes from disaster, and I was enabled, through its aid, to preserve the polish intact. I am persuaded that nothing can beat a razor as a remover of mud from boots. Its sharpness, no matter how caked the mud may be, enables one to shave the stuff cleanly away, especially from the soles and heels.



"FOR CUTTING UP OLD CLOTHES I FIND NOTHING CAN BEAT EDDIE'S RAZOR."



"NOTHING CAN BEAT A RAZOR AS A REMOVER OF MUD FROM BOOTS."

On the evening preceding the day on which my dearest Edwin returned home we had tinned peaches and, amongst other things, sardines, for supper. What do you think happened? Mary Anne, the stupid girl, had mislaid the can-opener; nor could it be found, although a thorough search was instituted immediately; it looked as if our supper would have to be postponed indefinitely when—I thought of Eddie's razor!

It saved the situation! Running upstairs, I carried it, the most useful of all household chattels, back to the dining-room in triumph, and found not the slightest difficulty in opening both the peach-can and the sardine-tin. I assure you, I enjoyed my supper all the more in consequence of my success. As for Mary Anne, the poor, stupid creature seemed positively delighted, and did not cease to grin during the remainder of the evening. The lower classes have really very little resource when they find themselves in a sudden or unexpected difficulty.

Being tidy, if any-

thing, I always took pains to replace dear Edwin's razor in its case on the dressing-table.

The morning following his return I noticed him examining the razor, with a rather strange expression on his face. I was so glad, for it gave me an opportunity of explaining to him how useful I had found it whilst he was away.

He seemed astounded. I suppose the silly boy thought that a razor was only fit for one thing—shaving his whiskers, and was so surprised at my proving the opposite that he



"I FOUND NOT THE SLIGHTEST DIFFICULTY IN OPENING BOTH THE PEACH-CAN AND THE SARDINE-TIN."

could find no words to express his thoughts.

But afterwards, when I had left the room, I thought I heard him utter quite a torrent of words. Since he returned I have not been able to continue the use of the razor. I rather fancy he locks his dressing-case every morning now.



The Guiding Hand.

BY OWEN OLIVER.



THE fog that lay in Gloom Valley dwindled to a mist as we rose up the hill; but the mist was thick enough to hide the lights of Braemar till they flung open the hall doors. The blaze of the logs made a feeble inroad upon the night, and showed a spectral driver beside a shadowy, panting horse. Old McAlister stepped backward as I came out from the darkness as though I, too, were a ghost.

"Mr. Arnold!" he exclaimed.

"I must see Mr. Robert or Miss Flora," I said.

The old man looked at me anxiously.

"There's nothing wrong with Mr. Hector, I hope, sir?"

I took off my mackintosh without answering him.

"It's nothing that I can tell you, McAlister. Will you let them know that I am here?"

He nodded toward the foot of the stairs, and Flora Bain came forward. She had not altered in the year that had passed—a long, long year.

"This is — unexpected," she said. I bowed. It was, of all things, unlikely that I should come there.

"I came to see Bob." She flushed. "I mean—I have business with him." She turned a trifle pale.

"Hector!" she cried. "Tell me."

"Not here. Take my arm. You are

faint." She put her arm in mine and leaned upon it. It was painfully pleasant to feel the touch of her fingers.

"He is not dead?" she asked, as we moved slowly down the passage.

"He is not dead." I almost wished that he were.

Robert Bain was dozing, with his head on his hand and an open book upon his knees. One ankle was bandaged. He had damaged it badly, while deer-stalking, I knew. In his sleep he was smiling a pleasant smile.

"Tell me," she entreated, with a thrill in her voice. "I shall break it to him best." I shook my head.

"Bob," I called. "Bob!" He opened his eyes and looked up at us.

"What!" he cried, with his ready laugh. "Flora! Frank!"

She shrank from me suddenly. We had been lovers once and were lovers no more.

"No," I said, with a choke in my voice.

"It is not that. It is — be brave, dear old Bob." I struggled with the words that would not come and sat down on a chair. His face went slowly white.

"Is he dead?" I wiped my forehead.

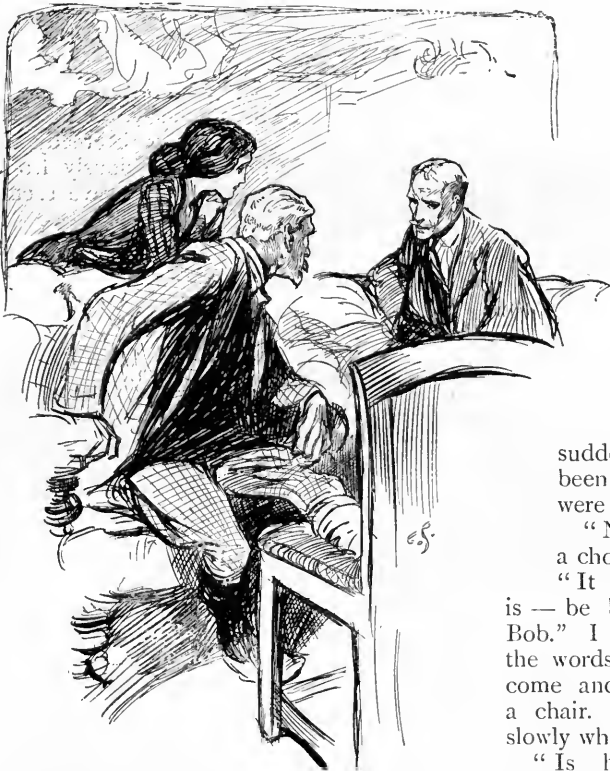
"Worse!" He grasped the arms of his chair

and Flora leaned forward.

"I will not believe it," she said, passionately. Her brother held up his hand.

"Tell us, Frank." I cleared my throat desperately.

"It was just after daylight; about a quarter to seven this morning. I was shaving.



"HE GRASPED THE ARMS OF HIS CHAIR AND FLORA LEANED FORWARD."

The landlady knocked to say that someone wanted to see me. He would not give his name, and he looked as if he had been out all night, she reported. I told her to send him away; but she came back to say that he would not go. So I saw him. It was Hector." I paused.

"Yes?"

"He—I wish I could say something to soften it—he had fallen into difficulties over racing and speculation."

"Oh!" cried Flora, scornfully; "if *that* is all!" She stopped suddenly, seeing my face.

"He took £10,000 of his employers' money." I turned my face away not to see theirs. "Of course, he did not mean to keep it."

"Ten thousand pounds!" said Robert Bain, in a hard whisper. Things had gone hardly with them of late, and the estate was heavily mortgaged. He could not raise a quarter of the sum.

"It would be found out unless he could pay by to-morrow morning. If I had had the money——" I looked at them appealingly. "You know?"

"Yes, Frank," he answered, "I know."

Flora's white fingers played restlessly on the little table beside her.

"And I know," she confessed, almost inaudibly.

"Clarkson and Read are hard men——"

"Hard men," she echoed.

"There was nothing to hope for from them. He had been to your Uncle Donald, knowing of no one else who could find the money. Your uncle refused and ordered him out of the house. He came to ask my help to get away from the country."

"The coward!" hissed his brother. Flora's eyes blazed at him for an instant, then she turned to me.

"Our Hector! You helped him? Frank—you helped him?"

"I helped him."

"I need not have asked," she murmured, half to herself. "You were always kind."

"Where is he going?" inquired his brother, in a dull, level voice.

"To Australia. There is a small cargo vessel, the *Anne Jane*, sailing from Liverpool before daylight to-morrow. He is going in her. I have given him what money I could lay my hands on. The other is all gone."

Robert groaned. "He asked me to come and break it to you." I laughed, hollowly. "I have done it badly, but——"

"May God bless you!" said Flora. Her

brother said nothing, but held out his hand.

"I was to beg of you to forgive him."

"Never!" he cried. Flora buried her face in the sofa pillow.

"I think you would pity him if you had seen him." Robert Bain shook his head, sternly.

"Bob!" cried Flora. "Bob, dear! He was our mother's son—her baby. She—Bob!" She put her hand on his knee.

"He is only a boy," I pleaded.

"Only a boy," echoed Flora.

Her brother said nothing; but he nodded slowly as he turned away to the fire.

We avoided one another's eyes for a long time. In the silence the quaint high clock on the mantelshelf ticked obtrusively. I remembered Hector's mother holding him up to touch the mailed supporters. He was a baby then and I was a child. He was barely twenty now. . . . He looked so haggard and ill. . . . He always used to be so merry.

"Dinner is ready, sir," said McAlister, glancing anxiously from one to the other. It must be a grave secret, he knew, that was kept from him.

"Presently." Robert waved his hand.

"Mr. Arnold will have come all the way from London, sir," the old man protested.

"I am not hungry, McAlister, thank you." He retired, with a sigh.

"They will all know," Flora sobbed, tearlessly. Her brother seemed to shrink in his chair, and I sought vainly for any word of comfort.

The fire flickered and went low, but no one moved to mend it. The old collie on the rug looked up in his master's face and whined, but he took no notice. Hector was always fond of the dog.

"Dinner is ready, sir," said McAlister again. His master frowned impatiently.

"For appearance' sake," whispered Flora. Bob rose slowly, and we helped him into the dining-room.

We had scarcely commenced when there came a loud knock at the hall-door. It was a telegram. Robert Bain glanced at it and leaned forward, excitedly.

"Has the man a horse?"

"No, sir. He came on foot from Long Hill." It is a village five miles away.

"Give him something to eat and drink," he said, mechanically, "and let him go."

The telegram shook in his hand. I took the flimsy paper from him and read it aloud:—

"For sake of family will do what is necessary. Send Hector to me at once.—
DONALD BAIN."

"We must telegraph to Hector to-night," cried Flora, excitedly. "It will be too late in the morning." Her brother took out his watch.

"It is now five minutes past eight. The telegraph office at Ben Vallon closes at nine. It is eleven miles away." I stood up.

"Let me have old Bess."

"No, no!" cried Flora. "You do not know the road." It was a dangerous one. "I will go."

"Bess could not do it," said her brother. "She is a cripple, like me."

He looked at his bandaged leg and groaned. Flora laid her arms on the table and put her head down on them.

"I learnt to cycle at the end of the summer," I told them. "I am only a beginner, but if I knew the road——"

Flora sprang up with her eyes ablaze.

"Will you ride with me?"

"Yes," I answered, promptly. I would have ridden with her to the end of the world—and beyond!

"It is to death," said her brother, hoarsely. Flora laughed her soft, deep laugh.

"In good company!" She smiled at me and held out her hand. I pressed it firmly.

"To live in or die in!" I vowed.



"FLORA SPRANG UP WITH HER EYES ABLAZE."

"I will go on my bicycle," said Flora.

"It would be murder!" I cried. "The road is barely rideable even in daylight."

"It would be murder not to go," she answered, determinedly.

"I sent your machine to be cleaned this afternoon," said Bob.

She brushed her hair impatiently from her forehead.

"I *must* go. I can ride the tandem."

"My poor girl, you could not drive it alone. If I were able——"

She ran away for her hat. I got the machine ready and waited outside in the mist. Robert Bain came to the door, leaning on McAlister's arm. In a few moments she tripped down the stairs, a slim, graceful figure, in a slight jacket and fur cap.

"Good-bye, Bob, dear," she cried. "Don't worry. *You* taught me to ride." Then she was beside me.

"If we come back, Flora," I whispered, as I held the machine for her, "I have something to explain."

"Nothing, Frank," she said, emphatically.

Then I leapt up, and we dashed into the darkness.

The tandem was a front-steerer and, luckily, her seat was in front. She was an expert rider and knew every inch of the rough road. I was a novice at cycling and, indeed, had never been on a tandem before ; but I had a good balance and plenty of nerve, and all my life had been trained to athletic exercise. So I gripped the handles firmly and pedalled hard, watching the slim figure in front of me, and swaying as she swayed. The cycle dipped into hollows, rose upon mounds, and leapt over stones. Once a broken branch lying on the road nearly threw us off. Twice I lost the pedals and tore the skin off my ankles in regaining them, but still we kept on.

"To the left," she cried. We whirled round the corner at the cross-roads. "Back pedal!" The machine became almost unmanageable down a steep decline. "Hold tight, I am going through the gap." The hedge brushed my arm as we dropped a foot into the narrow lane. We toiled through deep mud and over newly-laid flints. I could scarcely keep my feet for the jolting. There was a sudden whirr, and she gasped.

"It is only an owl." I laughed an unsteady laugh.

"Don't," she cried. "Don't!" I touched her shoulder gently with my hand. "You are so good."

"You are so brave," I told her.

"Only because you—to the right!" We wheeled into the main road again and toiled up the steep hill. The machine rattled and strained with our exertions.

"Slower," she commanded. "I am not sure—the left!"

My pedal grazed the milestone as we turned sharply away from it.

"Another eight miles," she said. I set my teeth and struggled on. The unaccustomed exertion was telling on me. "Faster, can you?"

"I'll do my best." I was beginning to fear that my best was not good enough.

"I never doubted it." She smiled back at me over her shoulder for a second. I knew that she smiled, though I could not see in the dark. "Seven miles."

"Are we near the top of the hill?" My breath was coming quickly and my legs were growing stiff. It was terrible riding for a raw hand.

"I—I think so."

A couple of dim lights struggled through the fog.

"This must be the village."

"Yes. No! The left!" I felt the hot breath of a horse.

We grazed along the wall as we passed a dog-cart. "Are you hurt?" she asked, breathlessly.

"No," I told her. My left elbow had been struck, but the numbness would soon pass, I hoped.

"Long Hill!"

A number of little lights streaked into the mist. There was a faint red glimmer at the doctor's door. A noisy chorus of invisible singers announced the village inn. The kirk at the roadside towered dimly over us. The clock struck the half-hour as we passed.

"Six miles to go," I said. "I am afraid——"

"We must do it," she cried; "we must." I did not answer. "Oh, Frank!"

"We will do it," I assured her; but I did not think so.

When we had passed the village we ran down hill for nearly three miles. The slope varied in all degrees from gentle to steep, and all the way we went as fast as we could go. She leaned over the handle-bar, straining her eyes to see the hedge on either side. I bent steadily to my work, with my eyes fixed on her. At the foot of the hill she drew a long breath.

"We may do it now," she said, but she was breathing hard and I was nearly spent. We were too tired to pedal evenly, and the machine was swaying a good deal.

"We will do it," I said. She detected the lack of confidence in my voice and sighed.

"The next lamp. Can you see the time?" I drew out my watch at the risk of overbalancing, not being used to relying upon one hand.

"A quarter to nine." She gave a despairing cry.

"There are over three miles to go. It is no use."

"We can try." I struggled fiercely with the resisting pedals. "Isn't there a short cut?"

"Yes," she hesitated. "There *is*; but—he is not *your* brother."

"He is yours."

She shook her head quickly.

"Your life——"

"Is yours," I told her. She did not speak for a full minute. Then she put one hand behind her and I touched it with my lips.

"Hold firmly when I tell you," she

warned me. "We are near . . . Another moment . . . Now!"

We bounded down a bank and up a bank. A couple of tall trees seemed to leap at us from the dark, but we whirled past them. Then we seemed to rise into the air; sank into a soft heap, tottered, almost stopped, went on again. . . .

"I have lost the track! Frank! Dear Frank!"

I let go the handles and put my arms round her. We seemed to fly into space. Something black and vague rose in front of us. I thought it was a wall, and put out my arm to fend her. Then my head struck against something. I lost everything for a moment. When I found myself I was sitting up, groping wildly for her.

"Flora!" I cried. "Flora!" Suddenly I felt her arms round my neck and her lips close to mine.

"I thought you were dead," she sobbed. "And I wanted to tell you—you know!"

"Dear love," I cried. "I know."

We said nothing more for a few moments. Then I suddenly remembered.

"The cycle," I cried. "Perhaps there is time."

We felt in the dark till we found it. We had fallen on soft earth and it was undamaged. After a short search we recovered the track and went on again, over heaps of stones and across broken ground, skimming

bushes, and just missing the dikes. When we came out into the road again the fog was clearing off and we could see almost from lamp to lamp. Shortly we came to the little group of cottages called "Mile Town," and the clock struck nine.

Soon after we heard the distant, indescribable murmur of the town, and the lights began to peep out one by one. A goods train was shunting in the station. We could hear the rattle of the trucks and a porter shouting to the guard.

"The station," I said.

"There is no light in the office." Her voice broke. "We are too late."

We dashed into the unlighted station yard. A short, stout man was locking the door behind him.

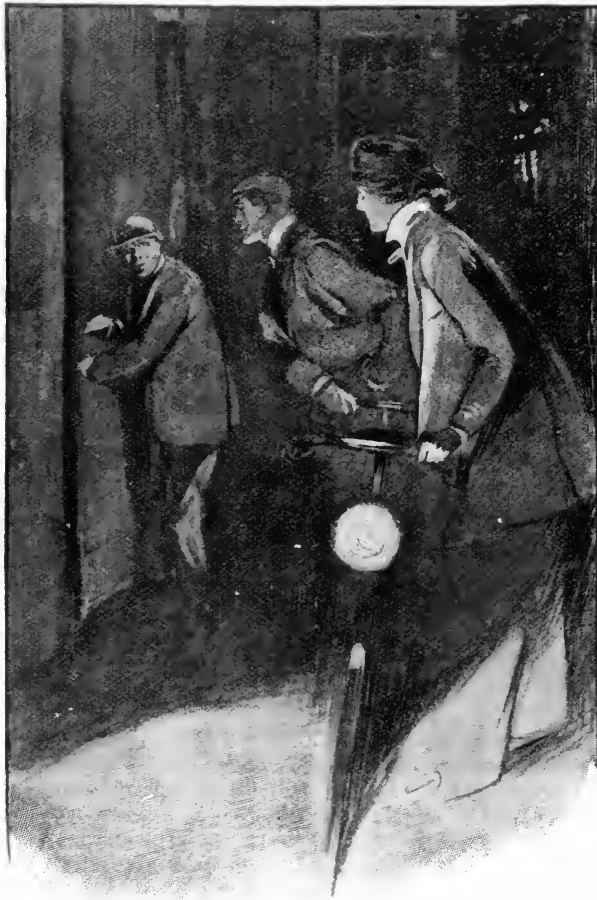
"Are you the telegraph clerk?" I asked. He turned the key slowly and put it in his pocket.

"I was," he answered, gruffly, "five minutes ago."

"If you were still," I said, quickly, "you would be richer by a sovereign."

He took the key out of his pocket, unlocked the door, and went in. Then he lit a candle-end deliberately and held out a telegraph form. . . .

When the telegram was dispatched we went to the village inn. They laid a frugal meal for us. We sat down to it with our chairs touching and pretended to eat. We did not say much. Though we were lovers



"ARE YOU THE TELEGRAPH CLERK?" I ASKED.

again there was a constraint between us. We had not been skilful enough in the past to reconcile two strong wills ; and we knew that we had to face the old problem again.

After dinner they harnessed a shaggy little pony in an ancient vehicle, and I helped her into it. In default of a rug I borrowed a blanket to put round her. She insisted on sharing it with me when I got up by her side. The pony went off at a jog-trot as I sat down ; but neither of us touched the reins. The fog had cleared off and the stars were shining. They made little sparklets in her eyes as she turned to me.

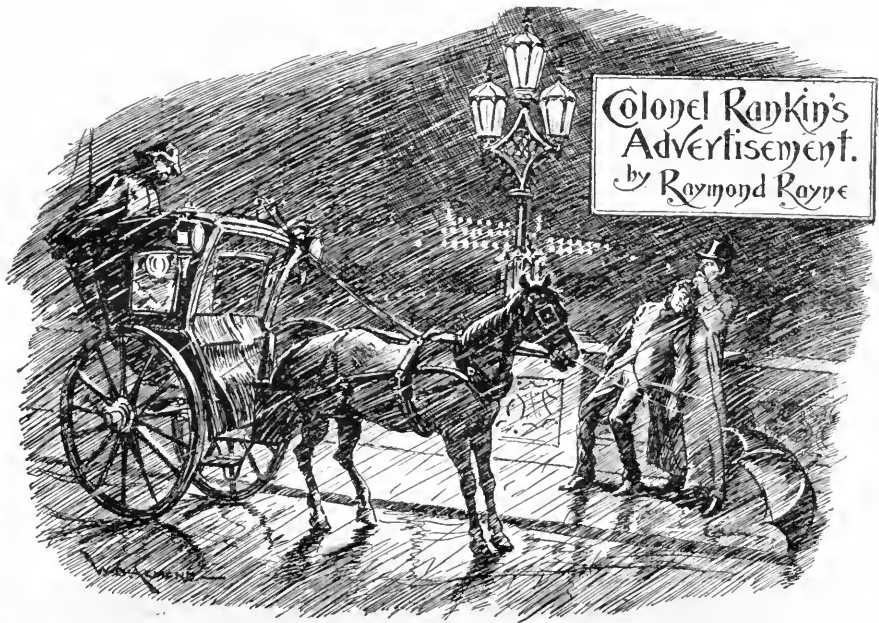
"It is the start of a long journey, Frank," she said. "Your hand must guide." Her lips trembled a little, and I looked for a moment at the brave, tender face and realized how much it cost her to say the words. Then I picked up the reins and gave them to her.

"To-night," I said, "my life has been safe in your guiding hands." She leaned gently against me.

"Dear love," she whispered, "guide mine !"

And so, with my hand over hers, we started our journey !





THE rain was coming down with a steady persistence that brought joy to the heart of the London cabman, but scarcely to any other class in the big Metropolis. The wet streets reflected like so many rivers the lights from the shop-windows and from the high lamps standing sentinel along the footways. Hansoms splashed and rattled homeward from the theatres and music-halls, while belated omnibuses plodded doggedly along their accustomed routes. The few foot-passengers whom necessity compelled to face the pitiless downpour hurried on their way seeking what shelter the eaves of houses and shop-fronts might afford. Even the stolid policemen in their shining black capes watched for the coming of the sergeant beneath the cover of some friendly doorway.

Near the middle of Westminster Bridge a man was leaning on the low parapet and gazing down fixedly at the dark river as it ebbed out Citywards. The rain had long since soaked through his threadbare clothing and wetted him to the skin. An occasional passer-by, hurrying across the shelterless bridge, would cast a glance at this solitary loiterer who seemed so indifferent to the inclemency of the weather, and then vanish quickly into the murky night.

The hands of Big Ben's clock were creeping together on the stroke of midnight when a hansom, driven at hardly more than walking pace, passed over from the Surrey side. The occupant, a tall man of unmistakably American appearance, peered through the side-windows of the cab with an amount of interest which seemed little warranted by the outlook. The figure of the lonely watcher seemed to arrest his attention, for he pushed up the little trap-door communicating with the driver and ejaculated the trans-Atlantic monosyllable :—

"Say!"

The cabman drew his reins to one side and applied his face to the loop-hole with an inquiring "Yes, sir?"

"I guess you can put me down at the Senate House," said the American.

"Where did you say, sir?"

"I calculate I'll get down right here."

The cab drew up sharply near the clock-tower and the passenger alighted. He paid the cabman. That worthy looked at the money in a manner expressive of mild and, on the whole, pitying surprise; he appeared about to say something, but a glance at his "fare" decided him to refrain, and contenting himself with a slight upward jerk of the chin, he drove off.

The American listened to the clatter of the departing vehicle as he opened a large

and heavy umbrella. When the sounds had died away he crossed the road and walked back towards the middle of the bridge. The solitary watcher was still there, motionless as a statue. The new-comer touched him on the shoulder and addressed him in the matter-of-fact drawl under which the typical American, the modern stoic, conceals his emotions and his interests.

"Stranger, I suspicion you are on the lookout for employment," he observed; "the market seems a trifle dull at the moment."

The stranger turned slowly from his contemplation of the river and became aware of the other's presence.

"I beg your pardon," he replied; "but I fear I have not the pleasure of knowing you."

The words were spoken in the unmistakable accents of education and refinement. They contrasted strikingly with the worn and tattered clothing, soaked and sodden by the rain, which clung to the limbs of the speaker. The American exhibited no surprise, but struck out a new line with perfect composure.

"I was remarking that it rains a considerable few," he observed.

"The weather is decidedly unfavourable," assented the other, with polite indifference.

"That is so," said the American. He paused for a moment, and then continued with a certain change of manner: "Hear me, sir! My name is Cornelius P. Rankin, and when I talk, I talk business. I am prospecting for a man to do some work for me, which is just a shade off the track. I took you on sight for a man with some spare time on your hands. If we can make a deal the dollars will be paid. If I'm weeping over the wrong grave say the word and I vamoose — no offence on either side."

A very faint smile passed over the features of the unknown.

"Your method of opening negotiations is perhaps rather irregular," he said, "but the prevailing economic conditions incline me to overlook the informality. At the present time I happen to be disengaged. The question of remunerative employment is one which I am prepared to discuss."

"Now you talk," responded Cornelius P. Rankin; "but I reckon this is not the place to discuss anything. I am located at the Third Avenue Hotel. Let us get up there out of this almighty deluge; a cocktail will run down pretty smooth just now."

His companion made no reply, but reeled back against the parapet and would have

fallen to the pavement had not the American seized him under the arm and supported him. He had fainted.

"This is a queer start," Cornelius Rankin muttered to himself; "he's not drunk, and he looks as if it was ten years since he had eaten anything. I don't feel mighty sure he's my man either. Well, I'll see him through, anyway."

In pursuance of this benevolent determination he placed his open umbrella on the ground and with the hand thus freed drew from his pocket a cab-whistle and blew sharply through it. The summons had to be repeated several times before a hansom drove up from the stand on the Middlesex shore. The tall American lifted his helpless companion in as easily as if he had been an infant. He returned for the large umbrella, which he carefully folded up.

"My friend is a bit overcome," he explained to the driver; "take us to the nearest bar."

The cab drew up before a refulgent saloon at the corner of Parliament Street. The American obtained a glass of brandy, shouted the order "Third Avenue Hotel," and again took his place beside his insensible companion. Under the influence of the neat spirit the latter had returned to a dazed kind of consciousness by the time the hotel was reached. Here the American was received with the deference due to a resident in the house. Under the style of "the Colonel" he was known to the servants as a customer whose tips were worth the earning. In response to his orders supper was quickly laid out in his sitting-room, and the two strangely assorted companions were left alone in front of a cheerful fire.

"Well, how do you sagaciate by this time?" inquired the host; "I opined you had gone out altogether before I got the liquor into you."

His guest replied in a weak voice, but with the same quiet incisiveness which had marked his conversation on the bridge:—

"I confess to feeling some uncertainty which side of the Styx I inhabit."

The Colonel was slightly puzzled.

"We are on the Middlesex side," he answered, at a venture; "this is the Third Avenue Hotel. Try one of these cutlets and some more of the fluid; you'll feel better afterwards."

Thus urged, the stranger commenced to eat. At first he evinced more distaste than appetite; soon his exhaustion gave way under the influence of the food, and he

began to do justice to the good victuals with a voracity that spoke of long deprivation. His host watched him with quiet satisfaction, only breaking the silence to urge him to further efforts or to recommend some dish which he had overlooked. At length appetite had to succumb to repletion. The wayfarer sank back into his chair with a long-drawn sigh of satisfaction.

"A feast worthy of Lucullus," he said, courteously; "allow me, sir, to express my deep sense of your hospitality."

"It is not hospitality, it's business," objected Colonel Rankin; "we have only just begun. You have got to come in here and take off those wet clothes; they are beginning to steam, and that spells rheumatics. I can fix you up with some pyjamas and a dressing-gown."

Turning a deaf ear to all protestations, the Colonel half-pushed and half-persuaded his charge into his bedroom, where he speedily provided him with the garments he had named. Returning to the outer room he pressed a button and the waiter entered.

"You can clear away, Parsons, and set out the whisky and cigars. My friend will very likely sleep on the couch. 'This is a late job for you, and we'll call it overtime.'" He took a half-crown from his pocket and gave it to Parsons.

"Yes, sir, thank you, sir," said the assiduous Parsons.

The Colonel lighted a cigar and smoked thoughtfully while his instructions were being carried out. As the waiter was finally leaving the room he took the cigar from his mouth and called him back.

"Oh, by the way, Parsons, I don't want my friend to leave the hotel without my knowing of it—you take me?"

"Yes, sir," replied Parsons, with a look of intelligence. "Good - night, sir."

"Good-night."

When the Colonel's guest emerged from
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the inner room his appearance was much changed for the better. The dressing-gown was too long for him, and he had turned up the cuffs to free his hands. But the general look of destitution and of being "down on his luck" had departed from him. As he sank into an arm-chair opposite to his entertainer his bearing was that of a man not unused to the luxuries and comforts which belong to easy circumstances. He accepted, with an air of habitude, the cigar and the whisky-and-soda tendered by his host.

"I find myself in much better quarters to-night than I had anticipated," he remarked, as he lighted the cigar. He puffed out the smoke with an air of satisfaction. "This is a Cabana, if I do not mistake, and a very good one."

"You are right all the time," said the Colonel, "and I like a man who knows his leaf. I guess we shall just suit. Let me give you my card for a start."

The guest took the card and read:—

COLONEL CORNELIUS P. RANKIN.

THE GREAT AMERICAN KINETOGRAPH.

"You have seen the Kinetograph at the Empress Theatre of Varieties, of course?"



"LET ME GIVE YOU MY CARD FOR A START."

There was ill-concealed pride in the Colonel's tone.

"I cannot say I have seen it, but I have heard of it."

"Heard of it," echoed the Colonel, with some irritation. "I swan you *have* heard of it. I have planted Kinetographs over the surface of the habitable globe. Hear me? I do not permit the orb of day to set on the great American Kinetograph. But this one at the Empress is a peach, a daisy. It will show you, sir, the events of to-day or any other day precisely as in real life. I will say better than real life, for you can sit quiet on your chair and enjoy them without worry. Where else can you see in one evening the Battle of Colenso; the Chutes at Earl's Court; the Siege of Pekin; the Finish of the Derby; Sir Alfred Milner paring his finger-nails; and a hundred other historical and interesting events?"

"I really do not know," answered the stranger, quietly.

The Colonel became calm.

"This brings me to business," he said; "you know who I am, but on the other hand——"

"On the other hand you do not know who I am," interposed the stranger, with complete self-possession; "you will excuse me, I hope, for not giving you my card. That is due either to the remissness of my engraver or to my having failed to give him the order. My name you may take to be Walter Heslop. I will not pretend that it is the name given to me by my sponsors in baptism. I have exercised the privilege of an adult and chosen it for myself, therefore any obligations undertaken in that name will be fulfilled by me."

"Well, that's the longest piece you've said, Mr. Heslop," replied the Colonel, "and it sounds straight. What might be your line now?"

"I presume you refer to my occupation. Until quite recently I was engaged in altering the position of wool at the London Docks. To be frank with you, I should prefer something more remunerative even if it should involve increased responsibility."

The Colonel smoked for some time in silence. At length he appeared to have made up his mind. He rose and stood with his back to the fire and his hands behind him.

"I like your style, Mr. Heslop," he said, "and I guess I can fit you out. But first I

want your word that whether you accept my offer or not you will keep it to yourself."

"I agree to that," replied Heslop, without hesitating.

"Very well. The King goes in procession to open Parliament on Wednesday next at three o'clock. The German Emperor will be in the procession. I want you to stand at a window in Parliament Street, which I will provide, and fire at him with a six-shooter."

This unexpected proposition startled the listener well-nigh out of his self-possession. He recovered it by an effort.

"At what amount do you fix the remuneration?" he inquired.

"The figure I have in my mind is two hundred and fifty pounds."

"So far as I am concerned you may just as well make it two hundred and fifty millions," said Heslop.

"You refuse, then?"

"I not only refuse," replied Heslop, speaking slowly and distinctly, "but I intend to give you into custody as soon as a constable can be fetched."

He moved towards the electric button. The Colonel's hand instinctively sought his hip-pocket. The action was only the outcome of an old habit, for he carried no



"HE MOVED TOWARDS THE ELECTRIC BUTTON."

weapon, and he suddenly burst into a loud laugh.

"Your promise," he said ; " you have soon forgotten it."

The other paused—he felt that there was something in the situation he did not understand.

"Let me explain things to you, Mr. Heslop," the Colonel went on. "I don't want that shooter to have any bullets in it ; advertisement is what I am after, not murder. You see, my Kinetograph will be buzzing right opposite you, and I shall get the champion record of the wide, wide world. Think of it, sir ! 'Attempted Assassination of the Kaiser : the Scene Reproduced Nightly by the Great American Kinetograph.' We shall get it on that very same night ; the entire island will rush to see it ; it will draw like the North Pole—it will run all over the world like horseshoes. What do you think of it ? Isn't it beautiful ?"

The Colonel's zeal did not arouse any corresponding enthusiasm in his auditor.

"You appear to overlook the fact that I should be torn to pieces in the meantime," he remarked.

"Not at all," said the Colonel, eagerly, "though really it would be almost worth it. However, you will run hardly any risk. The windows and rooms will be hired out separately for the show. I have hired a whole room for you without appearing in the business myself. Everybody will be on the stare. When you have fired you can slip out the back way and mix with the crowd. Not a soul will be any the wiser or any the worse. The people in your house won't even see it. The people in the street will see it and make a deuce of a row ; and the Kinetograph will see it, you bet, and take it all down in black and white." The Colonel said these last words with indescribable unction.

"It looks more feasible than I should have considered possible," said Heslop, thoughtfully, "and after all it is a sporting venture."

"That's just it, my dear sir," assented the Colonel, enthusiastically. "It's a sporting venture with all the odds on our side."

"And the remuneration—the two hundred and fifty pounds — when will that become payable ?"

"Look at me, Mr. Heslop," the Colonel said ; "when I meet a white man I know him. Pass me your word to see this thing through, and you shall have the dollars before you leave this hotel, and I'll tell you what—I'll make it three hundred."

Walter Heslop considered for several moments before he spoke.

"I will undertake it, Colonel Rankin," he said, at length. "I do not conceal from you that shooting at Emperors, even with blank cartridge, is not the occupation I should have chosen, but some men have foolishness thrust upon them. I accept your terms—there is my hand on it."

He held out his hand. The Colonel shook it warmly.

"I am delighted to have met you, Mr. Heslop," he ejaculated ; "and now I reckon some sleep won't do you any serious harm. I have only one bed here, but you will find that sofa a good substitute and there are plenty of rugs."

"I have slept well on worse beds," said Heslop. They exchanged "good-nights" and the Colonel retired towards his room. He stopped with his hand on the door-knob and turned round.

"I hope you will not be offended, Mr. Heslop," he said, with some hesitancy ; "but we Americans are an inquisitive people. Would you mind telling me what you were doing to-night on that bridge ?"

Heslop, sitting on the sofa, looked quietly towards him.

"Certainly not," he answered. "I was considering Bergk's interpolation in the Fayum fragment of Sappho. Does it seem to you that his reference to Chrysippus gives sufficient authority for the reading ?"

"I pass," said the Colonel.

The day appointed for the opening of Parliament by the Sovereign in person came in with a promise of "King's weather," in spite of the early season of the year. As the morning mists rolled away it became evident that only blue sky and the sunlight lay behind them. By ten o'clock streams of sightseers from every suburb had begun to flow towards Westminster. Already policemen mounted and on foot were in possession. The broad space fronting the entrance to the Houses of Parliament was kept clear by a compact line of troopers, who barred the way to all but officials and the privileged holders of passes. When Big Ben struck out the hour of noon the roadways were cleared along the whole of the route which the procession was to take. The pavements became so crowded as to be almost impassable, so that the possessors of seats in the windows of the houses made their way with difficulty to these dearly-bought positions.

At the Westminster end of Parliament Street, and on the side farthest from the river, stands a large open space inclosed by a builder's hoarding. The houses which formerly stood on this vacant land have been removed to allow an extension of the Government buildings. Behind the hoarding, and on a level with the heads of the spectators in the street, a long platform had been erected for the accommodation of some hundreds of sightseers. Here, in a space roped off to avoid the too-curious, Colonel Cornelius P. Rankin stood by his beloved Kinetograph. Under his direction the operator carefully dusted the lenses, wound up the clock-work, and tested every action of the delicate mechanism. A close observer might have noted signs of nervousness which disturbed the worthy Colonel's accustomed serenity. He referred to his watch at frequent



"HE REFERRED TO HIS WATCH AT FREQUENT INTERVALS."

intervals and each time compared its record with that of the large clock of the Houses of Parliament. He lighted numerous cigars and threw them away after drawing two or three

whiffs of smoke through them. From time to time he glanced anxiously at a first-floor window in the house which faced him on the opposite side of the street. The window was open, but no one appeared at it. As the hour of three drew near the façade of house-fronts became a wall of faces. At each window appeared rows of heads piled one above the other. The more adventurous found a foothold on abutments, on roofs, and even on the chimney-stacks. Still the window to which the Colonel's gaze was directed remained vacant.

The long vista of Parliament Street looked like a river between the two rows of soldiers standing smartly to attention who guarded it on either side. Behind these uniformed lines surged the crowd, motley and good-tempered, as only a London crowd knows how to be. From time to time personages of greater or less importance, in detached units or in small groups, would appear riding along the vacant roadway to take up their positions for the reception of the King's procession. As each new-comer was recognised by the crowd he received a welcome varying in character and noisiness according to the nature of his office or his personal popularity.

In the rearmost row of the crowd occupying the footway beneath the Kinetograph was a man who seemed more interested in the sightseers than in the spectacle they had come to see. His dress and appearance presented nothing to distinguish him from the hundreds of nondescript individuals of the middle class who pass everywhere unnoticed. His gaze, however, had a peculiarly concentrated and penetrating quality. He contrived to move among the masses of people with a smoothness and celerity that suggested long practice. Without attracting notice to himself his eyes searched the crowd as if he wished to identify every unit which composed it. The police, who were shepherding the surging masses with much impartiality, made an exception of this man. They affected not to see him. He was very well known to them, nevertheless, as Inspector Sangster, of the Criminal Investigation Department. In his close survey of his surroundings the detective had not failed to notice the vacant window, which seemed to oppose a kind of indifference to the general

interest and excitement. As he worked his way gradually towards the Westminster end of the street he passed a thick-set man of foreign appearance, who made a slight sign of recognition. He motioned to this man to follow him and preceded him round the corner towards Storey's Gate, where the crowd became gradually thinner and, finally, ceased altogether.

"Well, Klein," he said, as the other came up to him, "are we going to have any fun, or have you got all your foreign demons shadowed?"

The other detective answered in very good English, but with a strong German accent.

"Yes, Mr. Sangster, I have got one man to watch each of them except one, and that is the worst one of all."

"Who is he?"

"It is Brescia, the Italian. He is the most dangerous Anarchist in Europe. We were warned that he came to London soon after the Kaiser, and he has been watched. But since three days he has disappeared, vanished. I do not like it."

"I don't think there is anything in it," said Sangster; "we never have Anarchist outrages in England. The villains come here to live, you know, and they do not spoil their nest. Besides," he added, with a grim smile, "the English crowd likes its Anarchist in small pieces."

"You do not know this Brescia," returned the German; "he would risk anything."

The English detective became more serious. "Well, he would have no chance in the street," he said, thoughtfully; "but it has occurred to me that if a man had a house or even a room to himself he might throw a bomb or get in a shot and even escape afterwards."

"Donnerwetter! that is so," ejaculated Klein.

"It was an empty window in Parliament Street that put it into my head," continued Sangster, "and if I had got your job on my hands I would just send a man round to the house to make sure."

"I thank you, my friend," replied the German, eagerly. "I shall do so immediately. Which is the house?"

"Come back with me and I will show you. We have very little time — the procession will be here in less than five minutes. You would hardly get across the road now without me. However, I can manage it for you."

The two detectives quickly retraced their steps and disappeared in the crowd.

Colonel Rankin waxed more and more nervous, and even doubtful, as the hour of three approached. Another man would have counted the

risks entailed by his scheme, and wished himself well out of it. Not so the Colonel. His one anxiety was lest anything should prevent him from bearing off the precious record. His operators were already wait-



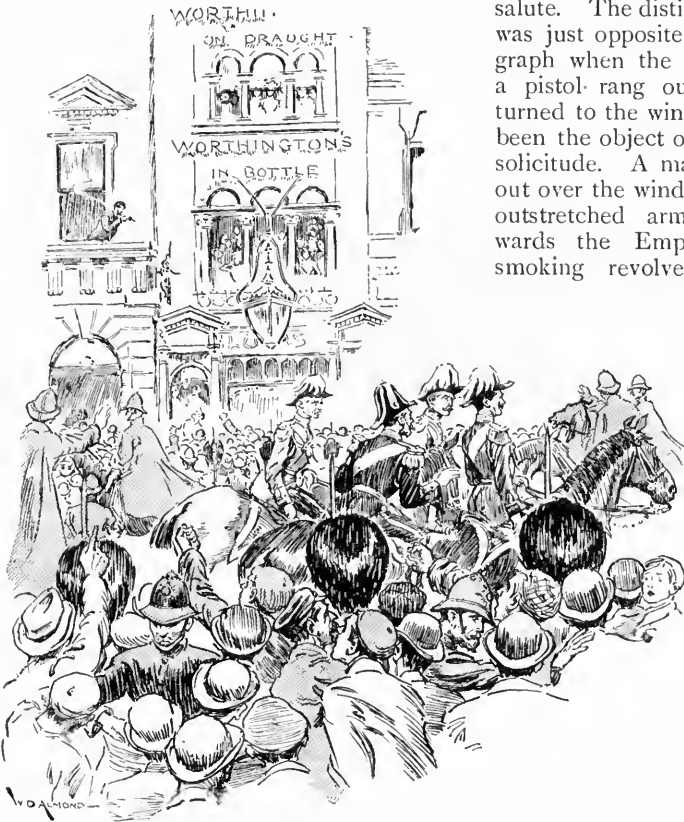
"YOU DO NOT KNOW THIS BRESCIA," RETURNED THE GERMAN.

ing to develop the film and make the myriad of little photographs which would reproduce the scene to admiring audiences. Punctually at three o'clock a burst of cheering announced that the Cuirassiers who headed the King's procession were in sight. At the same moment the Colonel, looking anxiously towards the window, was able to discern that it was no longer unoccupied. From within the room a man was looking down into the street, but so far withdrawn from the light that his features were not recognisable. The Colonel gave a sigh of relief.

"He is a white man, after all," he murmured to himself; "I thought I could not have gone wrong on that. What an almighty

advance-guard, and then a universal shout and raising of hats proclaimed the approach of the King and Queen. Preceded by a shining array of guards, they moved slowly by in their gilded State-coach, acknowledging with repeated bows the loyal salutes which greeted them. The coach passed on, followed by another detachment of guards. Even the stolid pulse of Colonel Rankin beat faster as the next group approached. The noble and kingly form of the Kaiser attracted every eye as he sat erect on his magnificent charger. With him were several members of the Royal House. The reception given to the nation's guest was scarcely less hearty than that which had greeted the Sovereign. The Emperor responded by

repeatedly making the military salute. The distinguished group was just opposite to the Kinetograph when the loud report of a pistol rang out. Every eye turned to the window which had been the object of the Colonel's solicitude. A man was leaning out over the window-sill with his outstretched arm pointing towards the Emperor and the smoking revolver still in his



"A MAN WAS LEANING OUT OVER THE WINDOW-SILL."

ruction we are going to have here inside three minutes!"

By this time the mounted men were within twenty yards of the Kinetograph. The operator started the clockwork, which began to buzz and click industriously. A short interval elapsed after the passage of the

hand. He appeared to be in the act of firing a second shot when he was seen to look sharply over his shoulder, and then suddenly withdraw into the room. Immediately another report was heard, and smoke began to issue from the window.

A scene of indescribable confusion fol-

lowed. The Kaiser had not even turned his head when the report was heard. To the anxious inquiries of those who crowded round him he replied: "It is nothing. Let us go on, or His Majesty will be made to wait."

But the mob did not take the outrage with the same calmness. The efforts of the military and the police were powerless to check them. The house from which the pistol had been fired was besieged by an ever-increasing multitude roaring for vengeance. Shouts of "Down with the assassin," "Throw him out to us," "Lynch him," were heard from every quarter. Sticks and stones were showered against the windows. The front doors had been closed and locked from within, and they withstood stoutly the kicks and blows of their unarmed assailants. Several of the more athletic endeavoured to climb up to the open window, but the projections from the house-front did not offer sufficient foothold, and they fell back baffled among the crowd.

The most astonished and the most enraged person present was Colonel Cornelius P. Rankin. He had anticipated the report of the pistol and the uproar which had followed. But he had not counted on the unexpected which always happens. The cause of the worthy Colonel's astonishment and rage was this—the *pistol had contained a bullet, and that bullet had struck the lens of the Kinetograph, smashing it into a thousand fragments!* The erring lead had completed its work of destruction by lodging itself in a very flattened condition among the wheels and springs which furnished the interior economy of that masterpiece of science. The effect was disastrous. With a noise like a clock of which the escapement is suddenly removed the mechanism shot forth into the sunlight a long, narrow strip of yellowish film.

The operator gave vent to a cry of professional horror. The precious "record" was ruined. Every photographer knows the black smudge which takes the place of the clear image when a mere ray of light has shone on the sensitive surface. Exposure to the broad daylight means a black patch instead of a picture.

When the Colonel realized fully that his cherished scheme had absolutely and completely failed his rage took full possession of him. With a bound he leaped down over the hoarding into the street. Elbowing his way through the crowd with remorseless and irresistible violence, he made for the road

which leads into Cannon Row. He thus gained the back of the house which the mob in front were vainly trying to enter. The door was unsecured. He dashed up the stairs and reached the landing at the same moment as the occupants of the upper rooms, who had tardily become aware that they were in the house from which the shot had been fired. The foremost of them stood doubtfully opposite the door of the first-floor room, while those above on the stairs and out of immediate danger shouted courageous and bloodthirsty instructions.

"Where is the tarnation skunk? Let me only get my hands on him," shouted the Colonel, as without a moment's hesitation he flung open the door. The others poured in after him.

There were three men in the room. On the floor one lay motionless. In the middle of his forehead was a circular patch, blackened and scorched, from the centre of which welled a dark-red stream. A revolver had fallen from the grasp of his outstretched hand and lay beside it. Bending over him with one knee on the carpet was the German detective, Klein. The other man was Inspector Sangster, of the Criminal Investigation Department. He restrained the new-comers with uplifted hands.

"Order! in the King's name," he cried, in an authoritative voice; "we are police officers, and this man is in our custody."

Klein looked up.

"He has escaped by a way of his own," he said; "he is dead." The Colonel was dumb with amazement. The features of the dead man were unknown to him.

"Who is he? Ten thousand mosquitoes! Who is he?" he asked.

Inspector Sangster recognised the Colonel at once.

"It is an Italian Anarchist named Brescia," he answered; "we were just too late to take him alive, but after all he has saved us a great deal of trouble. And now, Colonel," he continued, "will you be so good as to send some of our men up here? Lock the door there and let no one else enter."

He spoke like a man accustomed to obedience, and the crowd accordingly obeyed.

The Colonel, having fulfilled his mission, made his way back to his hotel in a state of complete bewilderment. Arrived there the waiter handed him a letter which proved the key to the mystery.

"Brought by hand about an hour ago, Colonel," said the man.

The envelope contained a small packet of



"HE RESTRAINED THE NEW-COMERS WITH UPLIFTED HANDS."

bank-notes, some postal-orders, and the letter. It ran as follows:—

DEAR SIR,—Since our last interview an unexpected, and I am glad to say beneficent, change has taken place in my external circumstances. I think you will understand me when I say that I have been enabled to return to that social stratum from which I was temporarily exiled at the time of our meeting. I mention this only in order to account for an enforced change in my attitude towards the affair which you were so good as to intrust to me. Unwilling, on the other hand, to fail in my obligation to you, I have delegated the execution of your project to a man who appears to be reliable, although I should state that my acquaintance with him began and ended at a hot-potato stall. At all events he is cheap. His fee will be £100. My out-of-pocket expenses have amounted to £1 15s. 6d., leaving a balance in

your favour of £198 4s. 6d. This sum I beg to inclose. I have avoided making any use of your name in the matter; my own, I may mention, has ceased to be

WALTER HESLOP.

"I said he was a white man," soliloquized the Colonel, ruefully; "but I reckon he's a bit of a piebald."

The newspapers the next day and for many days after contained very full accounts of the attempted assassination. They varied somewhat in detail, but all agreed in reporting that Colonel Cornelius P. Rankin, the well-known inventor of the great American Kinetograph, took a prominent part in the arrest of the criminal.

The New Musketry Practice at Aldershot.

BY ALBERT H. BROADWELL.

[The Photographs by A. J. Johnson which illustrate this article have been submitted to several officers at head-quarters, who were good enough to express their entire satisfaction with them.]



CAPTAIN E. L. C. FEILDEN.



HE greatest lesson in warfare taught to any nation during the last thirty years has been learnt by Great Britain in South Africa; it has been a thorough lesson in shooting, and it is important to note, therefore, that the authorities at Aldershot have not been slow in taking advantage of the experience of the past two years in teaching our soldiers how to shoot straight.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE for June, 1901, contained an article entitled "A British Commando," describing Dr. Conan Doyle's civilians' rifle club at Undershaw.

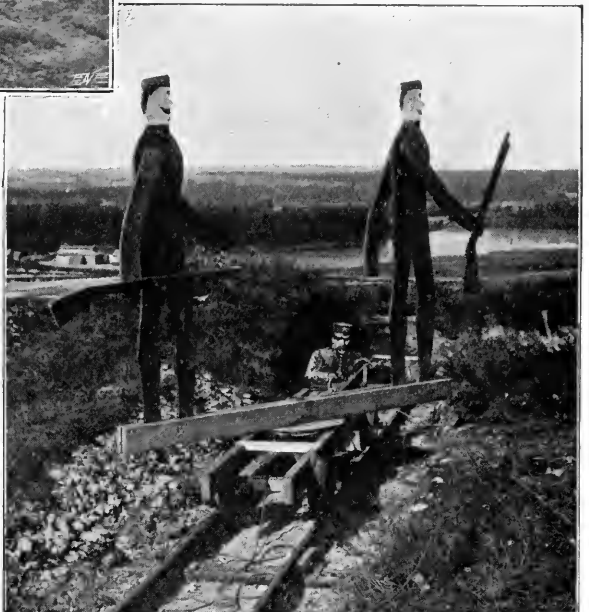
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Dr. Doyle may well be called the pioneer of civilian rifle clubs, for, ever since Lord Salisbury in his famous speech advised Englishmen to learn how to shoot, Dr. Doyle has given much of his spare time to the organization of a shooting club where bulls'-eyes rank before banking accounts.

The war in South Africa has demonstrated the fact that pretty sword exercises and cavalry charges *en masse* are things of the past so far as success in modern warfare is concerned, and *how to shoot* has become the great problem of the day.

What Dr. Doyle is doing for citizen rifle-shooting Aldershot is now doing for the Regulars on a more elaborate plan on the Ash Ranges at North Camp.

The Ash Ranges, under the supervision of Captain E. L. C. Feilden, to whom we are indebted for the arrangements which have made this article possible, have altered their appearance

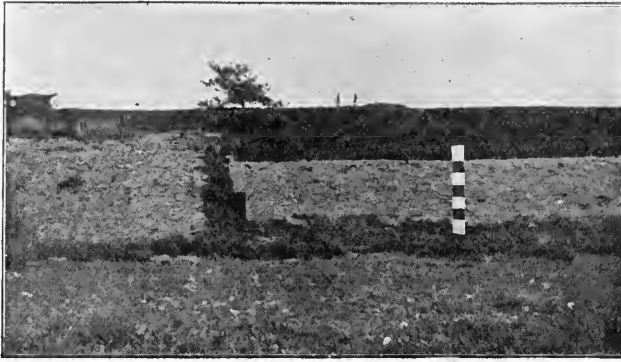


THE RUNNING MEN, SHOWING HOW THEY ARE WORKED FROM THE PIT.

in a startling and eminently practical manner.

The British soldier has shot at regulation targets too long, and he is tired of the monotony of it. See him on the Ash Ranges to-day and you will find him full of fun, of enthusiasm. Why?

Because he sees a head in the heather and



THE SAME FIGURES ON THE CREST OF THE HILL SOME 400 YARDS AWAY.

offers. No better ground could possibly be found for the purpose, for the Ash Ranges

the sport is to get a shot home before they are gone. That is what Tommy never had before; it rouses his latent energies and awakens that spirit of sport which is ever ready to show itself when opportunity



HEADS AND SHOULDERS AMONG THE HEATHER.

a moving enemy on the crest of the hill. Up they pop, down they go, in a twinkling;

comprise a series of kopjes and valleys which lend themselves admirably to the



THE DUMMY MAXIM AND WORKING PIT.



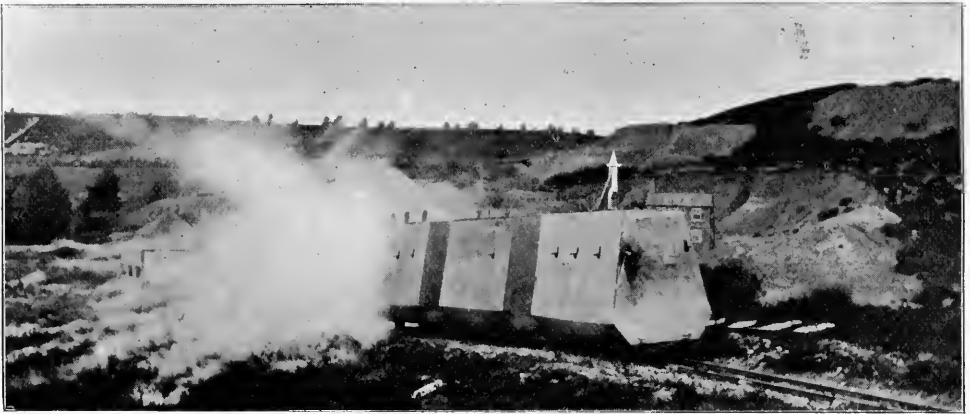
THE SIGNALLER.

object in view. The various moving targets which are scattered over the field of opera- idea of a field-day on the ranges we will imagine, for the time being, that we are



THE DUMMY CAVALRY—NOTE THE ROPES WHICH KEEP THE FIGURES STRAIGHT.

tions are designed to represent the dispositions of a defending force prepared to meet part and parcel of the attacking force. Forward! march! We scatter and become

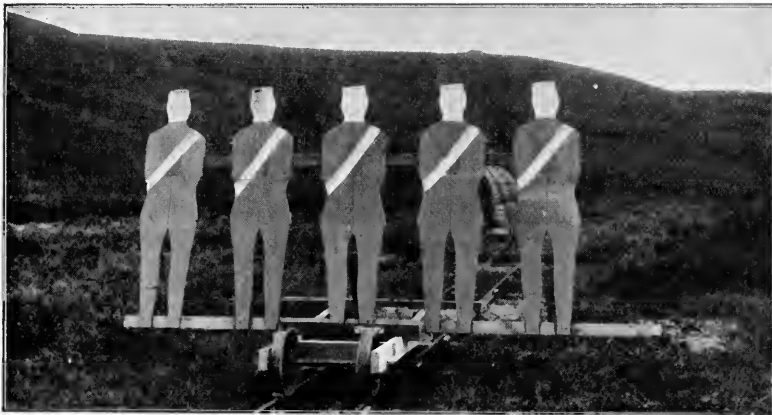


THE DUMMY ARMOURD TRAIN SPITS FIRE.

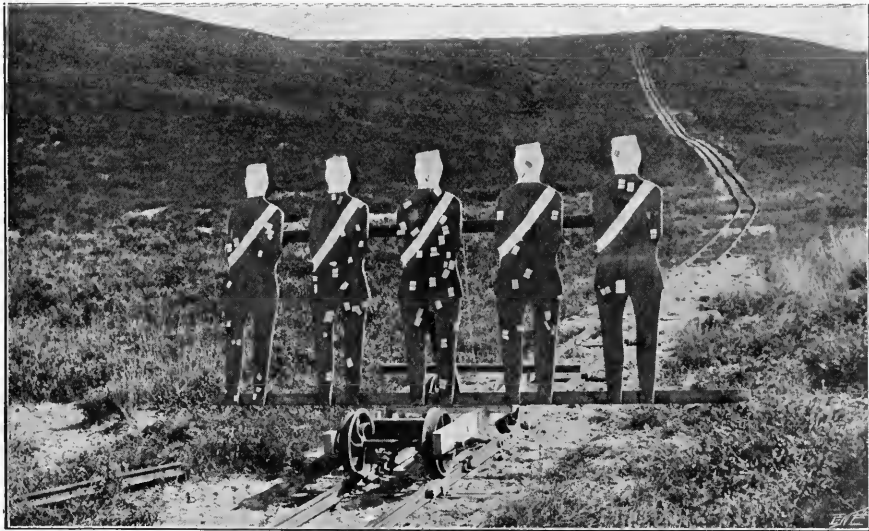
an enemy invading the ranges from the south. In order to give our readers an units; that is to say, units of a long, straggling line of creeping, ever-advancing foes! We



THE ARMOURD TRAIN "GOING HOME." THE WHITE PATCHES INDICATE THE HITS AFTER A FIELD-DAY.



THE TRAIN-WRECKING PARTY BEFORE—



AND AFTER THEIR CHARGE DOWN THE HILL ON A TROLLEY.

avail ourselves of every particle of cover. What is that on the crest of the hill? The enemy? Who said the enemy? Why, yes, surely, there they are again. Watch those two men running along the crest of the hill — but before the words are out they are gone again!

Someone on our left has taken a pot-shot at them. A hit!—no, it isn't. They are there once more. Let us get nearer. On we creep: we reach the coveted hill; we make a dash for the top, and lo! before



THE BOER INNKEEPER.

us are the dummy figures of the enemy. On our right we detect a Maxim ready to fire. The gunner pops up and down behind the breach. "Shoot him if you can, boys!"—and the peppering begins.

Then, without a moment's notice, heads and shoulders appear in the

heather, and before we can take aim they are gone again! The magazines are brought into use and we pepper away for our lives. The heads appear again and are lost to view a moment after.

We reach the hill. Behold a signaller! He waves his flag, evidently sending a message to his commander in rear, reporting our advance. He's gone — our excitement grows to a tremendous pitch. There he is again! Ping, ping, ping — he's down! But, alas, it is not the rifle that



THE BOER INN.

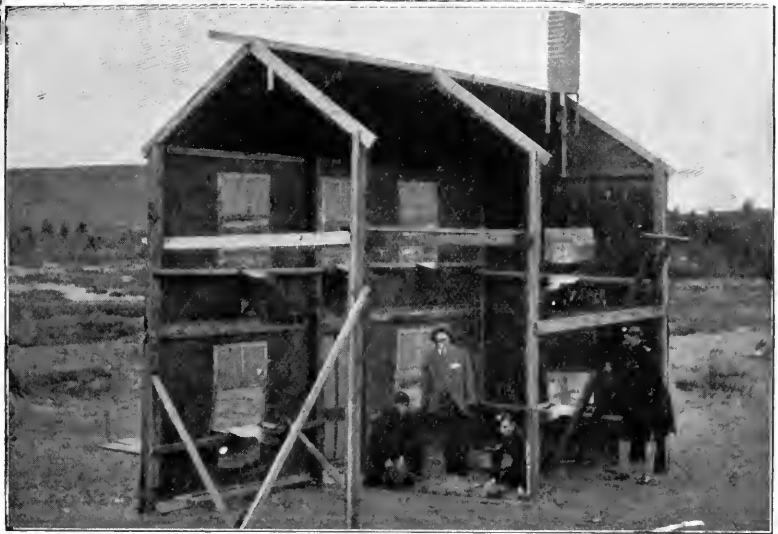
has done it, but the man in a protecting-pit behind, who has worked the life-like dummy. We advance cautiously. Five hundred yards ahead there is a house — a Boer inn. We intend to capture it, but we are not there yet. We have first to face a cavalry charge. The intrepid horsemen are dummies too, but none the less are swift of motion. Note the ropes which give them life. We give the mounted men a lesson. Look at the white patches, each of which denotes a bullet mark, and you will say that we have made good practice to-day.

We must get to the inn at any price; it must be stormed. We crawl again, down hill, behind hillocks, across ditches and ravines. But what is this? Take cover. A roar and a rumble—it is the armoured train! With a shriek it dashes across the valley and spits fire at us as it goes.

A party of the enemy has been sent to wreck the line as soon as the train has passed. They tear down the hill in front of us and disappear from view. They have had a bad time. Look at their poor dummy

bodies. But, see, they are up again for a few seconds near the signal-box. What is that loud explosion? Halloa! They have succeeded; yes, the line is blown up. They were gallant fellows, but they did not know the value of taking cover.

We do, and on we creep. There's a man

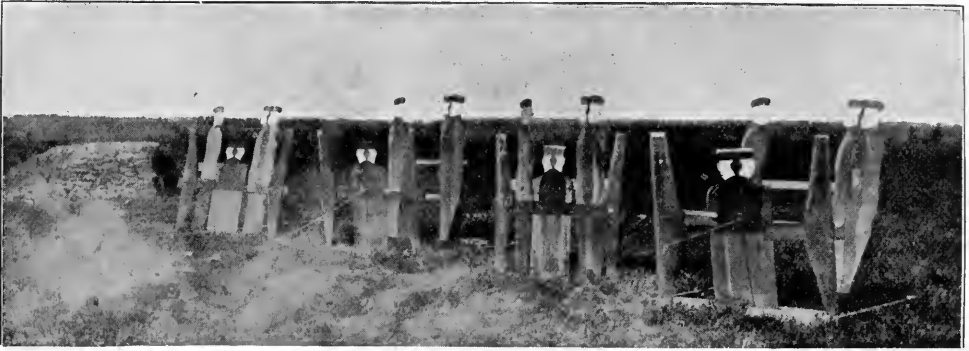


THE BOER INN—BEHIND THE SCENES.

coming out of the inn with a gun—probably the landlord. Steady, boys! Bang! bang!!



THE PIT, WITH MEN WHO "WORK" THE INNKEEPER.



THE DUMMY BATTERY.

We've got him! No, he turns tail and enters the house again. We do our best, however, and give him a parting shot in the back just as he gains shelter.

As we advance we obtain a glance of the

for we have done uncommonly well, but we want to come again.

Taking the matter seriously, too much importance cannot be attached to this new style of field firing; it is what our soldiers require—unknown ranges, hidden targets, appearing and disappearing in unexpected places, representing an enemy, in place of the old-fashioned large black and white targets. It also gives an interest which was formerly lacking. Let us hope that some similar kind of range will be constructed in every district in the country, and follow the lead which Aldershot has given us.



THE ELECTRIC SWITCHES, BY MEANS OF WHICH THE GROUND MINES ARE FIRED TO REPRESENT SHOTS FROM THE BATTERY.

back of this structure, and we note with satisfaction that we have left our mark on the walls—canvas walls—and on the dummy figures that appeared at short intervals at the windows. We climb another kopje and come under the fire of a battery, just visible in the far distance, craftily concealed under the shadow of a wood. We hear an explosion; it is the 15-pounders opening fire.

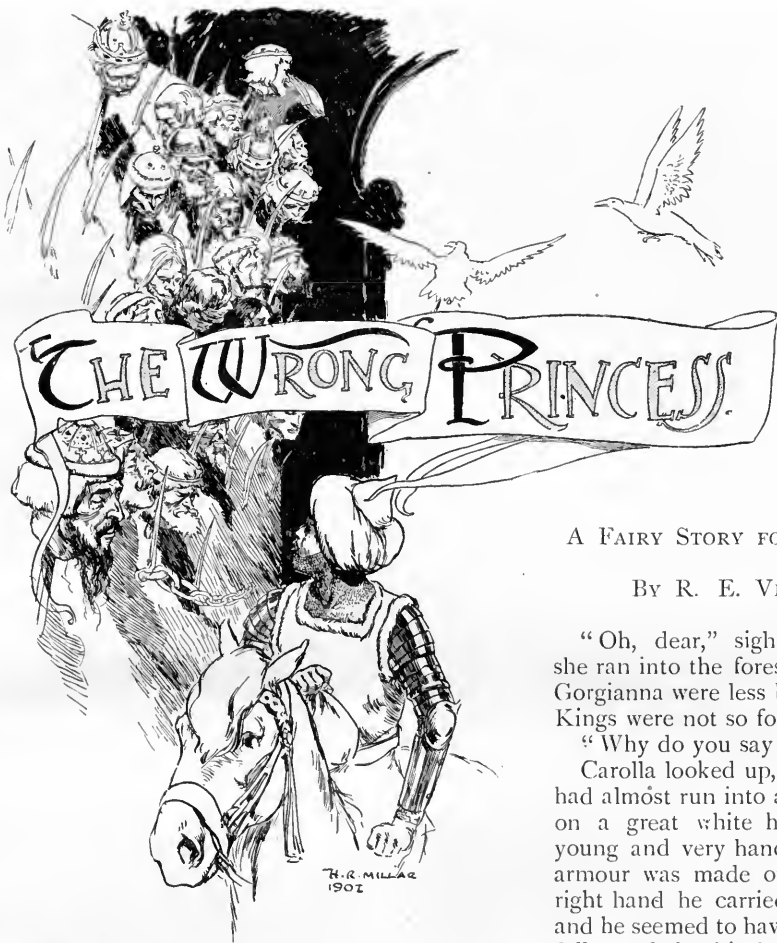
Halloa! One of its deadly messages drops and explodes less than twenty yards in front of us. Shrapnel covers our advance, but undaunted we move ahead, unswerving, towards the coveted goal.

We find out afterwards that the battery fire was not so deadly as might have been anticipated by anyone who did not know that the bursting shells were nothing more than ground mines fired, as we advanced, by electricity from the switch shown on this page.

So our illusion is over. We shake hands,



THE EXPLOSION OF A GROUND MINE.



A FAIRY STORY FOR CHILDREN.

BY R. E. VERNÈDE.

"Oh, dear," sighed Carolla, as she ran into the forest, "I wish that Gorgianna were less beautiful or that Kings were not so foolish."

"Why do you say that?"

Carolla looked up, to find that she had almost run into a man mounted on a great white horse. He was young and very handsome, and his armour was made of gold. In his right hand he carried a small sack, and he seemed to have been riding at full speed, for his horse was flecked

with foam. He pulled the beast up almost on its haunches, and repeated, rather angrily: "Why do you say that?"

"Because so many have lost their lives for her," said Carolla.

"Pooh!" said the young man. "What does that matter? For one so beautiful as Gorgianna, Kings should gladly die."

"Most Kings do die," said Carolla, but he went on, without paying any attention.

"I have ridden all the way from Landamor, through many countries of giants and magicians, because I heard that she was so beautiful."

"You are the King they expect, then?" asked Carolla.

"Does Gorgianna expect me?" he inquired, eagerly.

"She expects more diamonds," said Carolla.

"Child," said the King, impatiently, "you must be envious. What do poor maids know about Princesses?"



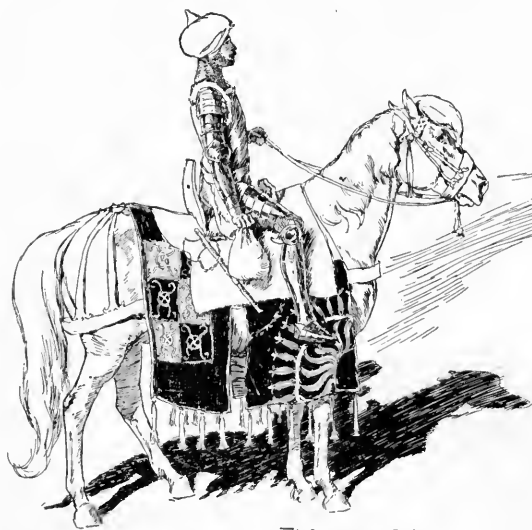
CAROLLA drew her ragged cloak about her and slipped out of the palace down the long avenue pink with almond-blossoms. No one in the Court cared where she went, for they were all busy preparing for the arrival of a new King, who was reported to be on his way to woo Princess Gorgianna, the Caliph's daughter. He would make the hundred and fiftieth King that had come for that purpose, and the heads of the rest were drying in the sun on the spikes of the palace gates. For Gorgianna was cruel as she was beautiful. She did not wish to marry, only to get the bag of diamonds which each wooer was bound to bring her as a gift before setting out on two adventures dictated by the Caliph, to be successfully accomplished before he could hope to win the hand of Gorgianna. These adventures were so dangerous that no one yet had succeeded in them, and the penalty of failure was to lose one's head.

Carolla blushed to be called a child and to be thought envious. But she did not tell the King that she was Gorgianna's sister, neglected and put in the background because of Gorgianna's pride and fascinations, for she thought that would give him further reason for thinking her jealous, which she was not. But because this King was so young and gallant, though not indeed very polite to her, she warned him earnestly of what would surely happen.

"There is nothing I wish more than that

green tree full of spring thoughts. All the creatures that dwelt there loved Carolla, and the flowers gave out a sweeter scent when she walked near.

Meanwhile the young King rode on, thinking only of the beautiful Princess he was so soon to see. As he came to a place of little downs that lay not far from the palace he suddenly caught sight of something oval-shaped that came bounding towards him, rolling up one hillock and down another. He would not have stopped to see what it was had it not been that it rolled directly in his path, and,



"HE SUDDENLY CAUGHT SIGHT OF SOMETHING OVAL-SHAPED THAT CAME BOUNDING TOWARDS HIM."

while it seemed to be a barrel, gave forth deep groans and murmurs.

"Is anything the matter?" asked the King, thinking it a most strange barrel. A voice immediately answered from inside:—

"Stop me rolling, and I'll tell ye!"

The King at once got down from his horse and steadied the cask.

"I never heard a barrel speak before," he said.

"Maybe not," said the voice. "The fact is, I'm the Vizier, and the Caliph had me placed inside this barrel and sent me rolling off in order that I might not warn the King that is coming to-day that he will only perish if he persists in wooing the Princess Gorgianna."

"Indeed," said the King. "Why is that?"

"Because she only loves diamonds," said the Vizier, "and every new suitor that comes brings her more."

"I don't believe it," said the King, angrily. "She is so beautiful that everyone tries to disparage her."

He was in such a fury that he let the barrel roll on down the hillock into the forest, though the Vizier groaned pitifully and asked to be let out. For all his kind heart the King could not believe but that anyone who spoke against Princess Gorgianna deserved whatever punishment he got. And again he rode on and came to the palace, and having handed over his bag of diamonds was introduced to the presence of the Princess.

the Princess should be married," she said, "and to show it I will gladly help you, if I can, on your adventures."

"You!" he said, staring; "how could you help me?"

"I know the forests," she said, "and some of the fairies that live there are my friends. Nothing can be done without fairies."

He laughed good-naturedly, as at a child, and shook his reins.

"Maybe," he cried, "but I help myself. Now I must be off to see this beautiful Princess."

"You will not go back?"

"Never," he said, and he put his horse to the gallop.

Carolla watched him sadly until he was out of sight, and then went and ran with the deer among the glades and sang to the birds. The forests always showed her something new, some wonderful little brook that gurgled its dreams among the stones, or some slim

Now it was Gorgianna's custom to receive her wooers very graciously at first, for she loved admiration, and knew that the more they admired her the readier they would be to go out on the adventures in which none of them had ever yet succeeded, so that she could be quit of them when she pleased. When the young King arrived, therefore, she was sitting among her maidens in her rose-bower, robed in a dress that was made altogether of diamonds, at the sight of which the King, because he was a little dazzled, thought her more beautiful even than he had heard. Her eyes were blue and wide, her lips pouted, and her hair was a shimmer of gold.

She gave the King a seat beside her and let him babble compliments, to which she only smiled sweetly, while she thought out a new corset that might be strung from the diamonds he had brought. She knew that the Caliph, who had been in a bad temper for some time, was devising some most impossible adventure for this new wooer of hers to embark on. Presently the Caliph came in; a fierce, small man, with the bushiest of eyebrows.

"Who is this?" he asked, abruptly.

"I am the King of Landamor," said the young man, "and I have come to ask for the hand of your daughter."

"Do you agree to my conditions?" asked the Caliph, grimly.

"To any conditions," said the King.

"Sign, then," said the Caliph, and the King, not being in a very thoughtful frame of mind, which was what the Caliph always counted on, signed the document that was handed to him. He read nothing in fact except the words "on condition that" and "I give you the hand of my daughter."

"Now you must go on your adventures," said the Caliph. "By to-morrow morning you must bring me as a token something New Done under the sun."

The King realized at once the nature of his folly, and began, in despair:—

"But——"

"There are no buts about it," said the Caliph, frowning, so that for all his small size he looked like a thundercloud.

"I only wanted to say——" went on the poor King.

"Surely you will do this little thing for me?" said the crafty Gorgianna, interrupting. She looked so dazzling that the King forgot that he had meant to say it was impossible, and could only stammer:—

"Of course."

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"Thank you so much," said Gorgianna, smiling to herself.

"Not at all," said the King.

"By to-morrow morning, mind," repeated the Caliph.

"Certainly."

"Or else you lose your head."

The King bowed himself out of the rose-bower and into the park, where he found his white horse waiting for him. When he had mounted, and the cool wind fanned his heated brow, he remembered again what lay before him, and cried out, as he rode:—

"But it is impossible!"

"What is impossible?"

This time it was the King who nearly rode into Carolla; but he was now so desperate that he was less polite than before.

"You are always in the way, it seems," he muttered.

"The road is clear enough," she said, smiling. "It is your fault if we have met again, for I saw you a mile away, and you have been riding up and down and round and round till you came right into me."

"I beg your pardon," said the King, being too proud quite to admit his error. "I'm afraid it was my fault or, rather, my horse's. He is a little dazed."

"I see," said Carolla, doubtfully. "You aren't, are you?"

"I—dazed?" exclaimed the King. "Why should you suppose so?"

Carolla hesitated.

"You have been to see Gorgianna," she said, at last. "And you have met the Caliph, and I heard you say something was impossible."

"So it is," said the King.

"What is?"

"To bring something done new under the sun to the Caliph by to-morrow morning."

"Oh, dear," exclaimed Carolla. "That does sound very difficult. You must go into the forests at once."

"What for?"

"To fetch it."

"But there is nothing done new," objected the King. "It's impossible."

"Not if you go to the forests," she said, eagerly. "At every turn there are strange things that the fairies have made, only they are hard to find. I do not know if you understand the way to search for them."

"I don't," said the King. "Do you?"

"Sometimes."

"Then you must come and show me," he cried, and before she knew he had stooped and lifted her up on the saddle before him.



"HE LIFTED HER UP ON THE SADDLE BEFORE HIM."

The white horse galloped like the wind under his double burden. The truth is that the green grasses grew springy for his hoofs, knowing well that it was Carolla whom they were speeding on. The King grew cheerful again, he knew not why, and began to talk of Gorgianna and her beauty as if no troubles or adventures were ahead. And Carolla, leaning against his right arm, listened and said nothing. So they advanced till they were among the great black trees, and a mist began to rise out of the ground. Quite suddenly the white horse neighed and stood still.

"I think we are in one of the Magic Glades," said Carolla. "Hark!"

Out of the mist there came a little piping voice, that sang thus:—

There once was a Dun-coloured Gnu
Which laughed at the popular view
That under the sun
There was nothing new done—
For it said—"I am always—"

"Dun gnu!" cried the King, "of course."

He spurred the white horse into the mist,

but the mist only closed about them and they could discover nothing.

"Where are you?" shouted the King.

There was no answer at first, and then Carolla tried.

"Please come out!" she said.

"Oh, very well," said the squeaky voice, and the mist seemed to fall away. The King and Carolla saw that they were in one of the forest-glades, in which a small house stood, and in front of it—on a stool—busily polishing a kind of harness, sat a very diminutive man, the owner of the squeaky voice. He looked up now and then from his polishing, but said nothing.

"Who are you?" asked the King.

The little man rubbed his hands together, put down the harness, pulled some spectacles out of his pocket, and adjusted them on his nose. Then:—

"Podgkin," he said.

"Then, Mr. Podgkin——" began the King.

"Plain Podgkin," said the little man, snappily.

"Dear Podgkin," exclaimed Carolla, knowing that most probably he was a magician, who, like other people, are very particular in many ways, but usually to be won over by friendliness. "Dear Podgkin, will you please tell me about the Dun Gnu?"

"Certainly," said the little man, chuckling at her address. "He's got a hump unlike other gnus, and he lives on the Spiky Star." He looked from one to the other and added:—

"Is that all you wanted to know?"

"Not all," said the King, disconsolately.

"I wanted to capture it."

"And you will help us, won't you?" said Carolla, persuasively.

The small magician looked at her and was melted.

"Then you'll have to go to the Spiky Star," he said. "How will you get there, you ask? Rocs, my dear sir, rocs!"

"Rocs?" echoed the King.

"Hav'n't you heard of 'em?" asked the magician. "Big birds that can pick up an elephant and carry him off to a valley of rubies. Well, I don't wonder. They've nearly died out; but I found a trace—an egg!"

"A roc's egg?"

"Yes," said the magician. "Now, you'd have blown that egg or poached it. I didn't. I put it in an oven. What's the consequence, eh?"

"It got cooked," the King suggested.

"No, sir," said the magician, his little eyes flashing. "The shell splintered, out popped—what do you think?"

"A roc?"

"Two rocs, my dear sir, two rocs—twins—Gobble and Wobble. Come with me. I'll show 'em to you."

He sprang off his stool and danced his way excitedly into a back-yard, completely wired round and roofed, so as to form a huge kind of hen-run. Up and down this two immense birds, as big as mammoths and of a skewbald colour, were stalking. As they heard Podgkin approach they ran to the side of the wire and put their beaks through and flapped their wings, manifesting every sign of delight.

"There, sir!" said the magician, proudly.

"A splendid pair of fowls!" exclaimed the King.

"Dears!" said Carolla.

"Aren't they?" said the magician, delighted. "They're in fine feather, hey? They're little beauties—they're ducks."

"But can they fetch the Dun Gnu?" asked the King, anxiously.

"No," said Podgkin. "But they can carry us to the Spiky Star, if need be, and there you can catch the Dun Gnu by putting pepper on his hump."

The King felt much relieved.

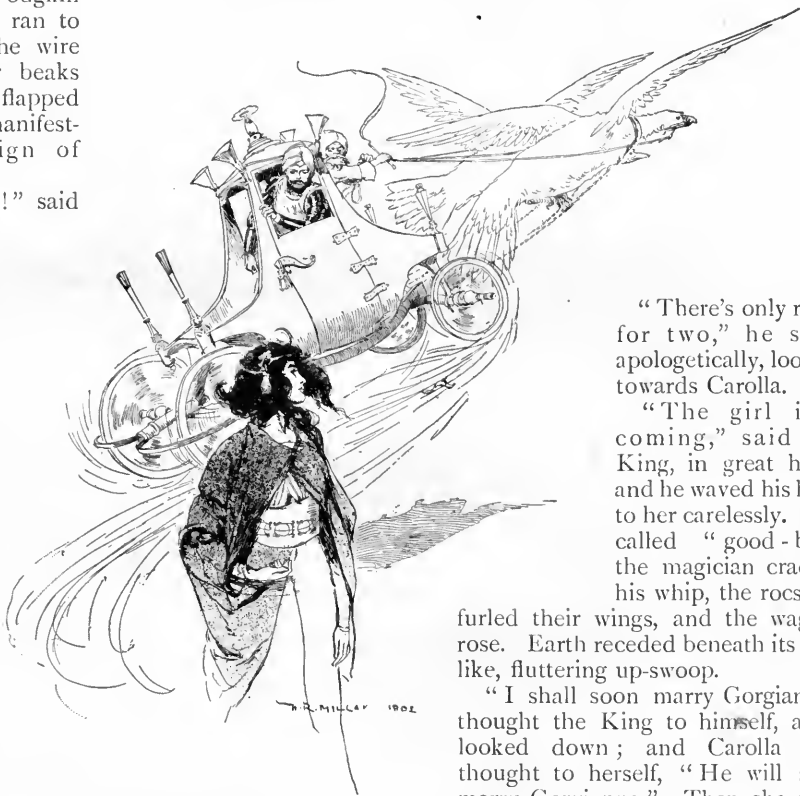
"Let us start at once," he said. "I must be back with the Dun Gnu before to-morrow morning, or I shall lose the loveliest Princess in the world and my head."

"She is pretty," said the magician. "But I don't know——"

"Oh, do take the King!" said Carolla.

The fact was that the magician supposed the King to be in love with Carolla, whom he also loved as a daughter. So that, although the King had really forgotten all about Carolla, and was already feasting his mind with thoughts of his success and the smiles and thanks he would win from Gorgianna, Podgkin agreed to take him.

It was already nearly dusk and time to start. The magician, with the King's assistance, got out a light waggon from his stables, a whip, and a tin of pepper, harnessed Gobble and Wobble, and invited the King to get in.



"THE ROCS UNFURLED THEIR WINGS, AND THE WAGGON ROSE."

"There's only room for two," he said, apologetically, looking towards Carolla.

"The girl isn't coming," said the King, in great haste, and he waved his hand to her carelessly. She called "good-bye," the magician cracked his whip, the rocs unfurled their wings, and the waggon rose. Earth receded beneath its lark-like, fluttering up-swoop.

"I shall soon marry Gorgianna," thought the King to himself, as he looked down; and Carolla also thought to herself, "He will soon marry Gorgianna." Then she went back to the palace, feeling a little sad, and crept up to her attic noiselessly and slept until the morning.

Quite early the Caliph was up and about. He had sent for his headsman and bidden him sharpen an axe, and he had personally inspected, before breakfast, the gate upon which he intended to spike the head of his latest victim.

Gorgianna, too, had risen and sat lazily on her throne, looking at herself in a mirror which one of the handmaidens held before her. She wore the corset which she

had had made out of the King's diamonds, and felt more resplendent than ever, and the more anxious for a new suitor to make her such another splendid gift. Her annoyance, therefore, and the Caliph's may easily be imagined when through the windows they saw riding up the almond avenue on his white horse the King, and led by a rope—contrary to all expectation—the dun gnu.

The King was well pleased with himself and naturally astonished to see the sour looks of the company when he rode up. The Caliph, indeed, could not conceal his displeasure, and though Gorgianna smiled hypocritically anyone who knew her would have noted the way she drew in her underlip and pressed her teeth against it.

The King bowed in front of them.

"I count myself happy," he said, "to have succeeded in this adventure, and to be able to place at your feet the Dun Gnu."

"Oh," said the Caliph, "indeed!"

"It's an ugly creature," said Gorgianna.

"Everything cannot be so beautiful," said the King to her, a little disappointed at the same time.

Gorgianna feigned a smile, but the Caliph only frowned. "You seem to have succeeded in your first attempt," he said, grudgingly, "but a second awaits you before you can claim my daughter's hand."

"Is it true?" said the King, aghast.

"You would not expect to win me too easily," said Gorgianna, aloud, as the Caliph came across to her and began

whispering. The truth is, he had been so taken by surprise that he had not schemed any second adventure that would insure the King's unsuccess.

"We must make certain this time," he hissed in his daughter's ear. "I long for his head."

"I also am tired of him," she said.

"Think of something then."

So, while the King waited in impatience, this wicked pair put their heads together to bring about his downfall. The Caliph would not hear of any of the ordinary impossibilities, such as making him drain a pond with a sieve, or construct ropes out of sand, or walk up a pole of ice.

"It must be harder than that," he vowed.

"What should you say to making him find for us some Wood that Sings?" asked Gorgianna, at length.

"Does wood sing?" said the Caliph.

"No."

"Then that will do."

He turned to the King.

"By to-morrow morning," he said, "you must bring me some Wood that Sings."

"But no wood sings," objected the King.

"Oh, yes, it does," said the Caliph.

"Don't dare to contradict me. Unless you bring it by the time I have named you will lose your head. You are dismissed."

With a wave of his hand he beckoned to the King to be gone, and as the young man obeyed he heard behind him the mocking laughter of the Princess Gorgianna.

"And I thought her so beautiful," he said to himself in a rage, as he rode off. "But I doubt if she is as fair or half



"THE CALIPH CAME ACROSS TO HER AND BEGAN WHISPERING."

so kind as the ragged girl that helped me yesterday."

Being struck by the contrast between the Princess and one whom he took for a beggar-girl he began to call her name: "Carolla."

But no one came.

"She has forgotten me," thought the King, bitterly, but he did not remember that he had forgotten her until this moment. He had come in the course of his riding to the little place of downs outside the forests where he had met the rolling barrel on the first day. The track it had left in the grass reminded him of the Vizier's saying, and it struck him with remorse how that in that hour of what he believed to be his own approaching happiness he had left the poor man to roll on for ever, just because he had told the truth about the Caliph and Gorgianna. At least he could remedy this unkindness, even if he could not find the Wood that Sings or save his own head. As he came to this conclusion, and spurred his white horse on, it seemed to him that all the trees about him became musical with birds, and the words they sang were "Carolla, Carolla, Carolla." But he could not very well take the forest to the Caliph, so that he banished all thought of himself and his danger from his mind, and followed the traces of the barrel. They led him farther and farther into the forest. Rabbits came out and peeped at him, unscared, and squirrels dropped nuts into his lap from their store-rooms in the trees. Even a hind, most timid of creatures, ran beside him for some way and made soft eyes at him.

The King wondered how it was they knew that he was not come a-hunting that day.

Presently he had quite a retinue of followers in his train: skylarks and doves, hares and foxes, stags, two honey-bears, a lynx, and, toiling in the rear, perseveringly, a tortoise. It was a little ridiculous, perhaps, and the King was not quite pleased to hear a sudden ring of silvery laughter as he galloped through a glade. But when he saw who laughed he could not be angry.

"Carolla!" he cried, looking at her, eagerly. Before, he had scarcely noticed her; but now, though she was still dressed raggedly, he saw her great beauty. Brown cheeks, and small brown hands, and a maze of brown hair, lips more cherry-red than Gorgianna's—he thought—and great grey eyes, like clear deep pools seen through a fringe of dark lashes—that was Carolla. And with the sun shining upon her, and the trill

of her laughter still in the air, he quite forgot Gorgianna. So changeable is a King.

"What a train!" she laughed. "But I am glad the creatures like you."

"Then, I am glad," the King agreed.

"But why do you ride this way?" she asked.

"To find the Vizier."

The King confessed his heartlessness of the previous day, and Carolla rebuked him.

"I too am looking for him," she said. "It was only this morning that I heard of his mishap. It seems that he insulted the Caliph in trying to protect you."

"It's all my fault," said the King, regretfully.

"But I think," went on Carolla, "that we shall find him soon. I only stopped because I fancied that I heard him singing."

"Singing?"

"Hark!"

She held up her hand and, listening hard, they caught the following words:—

Hoots! monie a wearie hour's to seek

Since wi' Kirsteen I walkit:

A red, red rose was on her cheek

An' saxpence in ma pocket.

"That's the Vizier," said Carolla, nodding. "Come."

The King and she advanced, and saw—not far off—the barrel, which had stuck in a bush. Again the song rose:—

I've trampit over Arctic snows

Where walruses bereft me:

But, losh, I've no forgot the rose,

The saxpence hasna left me.

"Why," said the King, "that is the Wood that Sings!"

He explained to Carolla what sort of second adventure the Caliph had set him, and she listened gravely.

"You must roll the barrel back," she said, "to the palace."

"But I don't want to marry the Princess," said the King, obstinately.

"Then you'll lose your head," answered Carolla.

"It's not worth much," said the King, gloomily, but she would not listen to him, and went over to the barrel to comfort the Vizier.

"Eh, is it you, Princess?" he cried.

"Yes," she said; "and I've brought the King with me to take you back to the palace in safety, unless you would rather get out here."

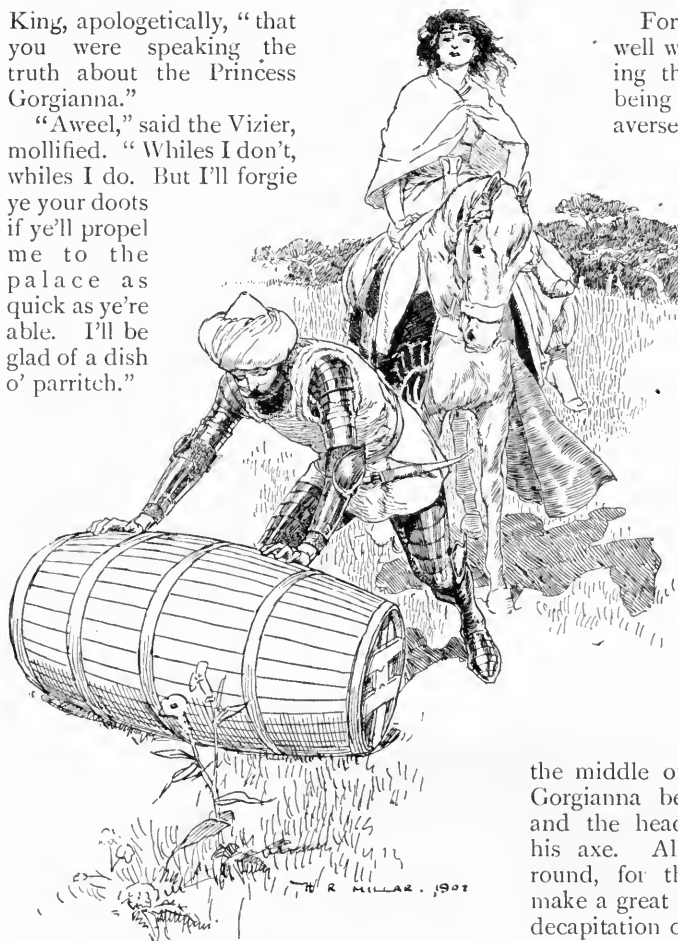
"Is yon the King that I happened on yesterday?" asked the Vizier, indignantly.

"Yes," said Carolla.

"But I had no idea then," added the

King, apologetically, "that you were speaking the truth about the Princess Gorgianna."

"Aweel," said the Vizier, mollified. "Whiles I don't, whiles I do. But I'll forgie ye your doots if ye'll propel me to the palace as quick as ye're able. I'll be glad of a dish o' parritch."



"SO THEY STARTED BACK FOR THE PALACE."

So they started back for the palace, the Vizier humming to himself contentedly, the King pushing him. Carolla rode the King's white horse. She kept behind a little, thinking to herself that now the King would get his desire and marry the Princess Gorgianna, which thought made her somehow a little melancholy. The King, too, was not feeling in the best of spirits.

"Why was it," he said, tapping on the barrel to attract the Vizier's attention—"why was it that you called Carolla 'Princess' when she is no more than a beggar-girl?"

"A beggar-girl!" said the Vizier. "She's the Caliph's dochter! 'Tis only her sister's jealousy that keeps Carolla in an attic."

"The Caliph's daughter!" repeated the King, amazed.

"Dinna stop pushing, young man," said the Vizier, "or I'll stop singing, and ye'll get nothing of what ye want."

For the cunning old man knew very well what sort of reflections were passing through the King's mind, and, being very fond of Carolla and not averse to paying out the Caliph for having put him in the barrel, meant to bring off a plan that he had in his head.

"If I take to the Caliph's palace the Wood that Sings," said the King, "I can demand to marry the Caliph's daughter."

"There'll be two maids," said the Vizier. "Ye'll have to choose."

"Of course," said the King, and he began to roll the barrel with renewed energy.

It was not until the afternoon that they came to the palace. The Caliph had put up a great stand in the park outside, and in the middle of it he sat on his throne, with Gorgianna beside him in all her diamonds and the headsman just behind leaning on his axe. All the courtiers were crowded round, for the Caliph had determined to make a great carnival that day, at which the decapitation of the King would be a leading feature. Fury and indignation nearly consumed him, therefore, when he suddenly became aware of the strange procession of the Vizier in the barrel, singing loudly, the King pushing with all his might, and Carolla riding behind on the white horse.

"What is this?" he demanded, fiercely.

"This is the Wood that Sings," said the King, and at that the Vizier strained his lungs in a roundelay that made the barrel resound like an organ. The Caliph exchanged glances of disgust with Gorgianna.

"I suppose I shall have to marry him now," she whispered.

"I demand your daughter's hand in marriage," continued the King.

"Very well," said the Caliph, sulkily.

The King turned to where Carolla sat on the white horse and lifted her down.

"She is the loveliest Princess in the world," he said.

"Corolla!" hissed Gorgianna.

"Her!" said the Caliph, ungrammatically.

"That's the wrong Princess. She's hardly one at all."

"I can't agree with you," said the King. "She seems to me the right Princess, and very shortly she will be my Queen."

"Never," yelled the Caliph, "never," and Gorgianna, crimson with envy and shame at being passed over for her younger sister, leaned over and whispered something in his ear. The Caliph nodded, and called to his headman.

"Go and cut off all their heads!" he said, fiercely.

Carolla clung to the King, the King drew his sword and prepared to resist all the Caliph's army, if need be, and the Vizier ended his song in a quavering note. It seemed not unlikely that in another moment they would cease to live, when suddenly there was a great whir of wings in the air overhead, and all present saw Podgkin arrive in his car, drawn by the great rocs, Gobble and Wobble. They swooped down and perched beside the King.

"Get in!" said Podgkin. "It'll be a tight fit, but I can take you all for once in a way."

The King lifted Carolla into the car and the white horse stepped in after her, arching his mane. Podgkin himself rolled the Vizier still in the barrel in after them.

Before the Caliph could understand what was happening they were all in the car. Gobble and Wobble rose slowly and hovered in mid-air just over the Caliph's head. Podgkin put his arm out of the window and

began to drop a curious white powder on to the heads of all below.

"Stop!" shrieked the Caliph. "Restore me my prisoners."

The magician went on strewing his powder. Carolla and the King were so much taken up with each other that they did not see what was happening.

"Stop!" shrilled Gorgianna.

Then Podgkin spoke in a stern voice.

"There probably never was a worse Caliph," he said, "nor an uglier Princess than you, Gorgianna, beneath your diamonds, for you are both greedy and cruel and heartless. So I have determined to punish you. In a little while you and all your courtiers will be

no better than plaster, for the dust I am throwing is magic, and turns everyone it touches into statues for a thousand years."

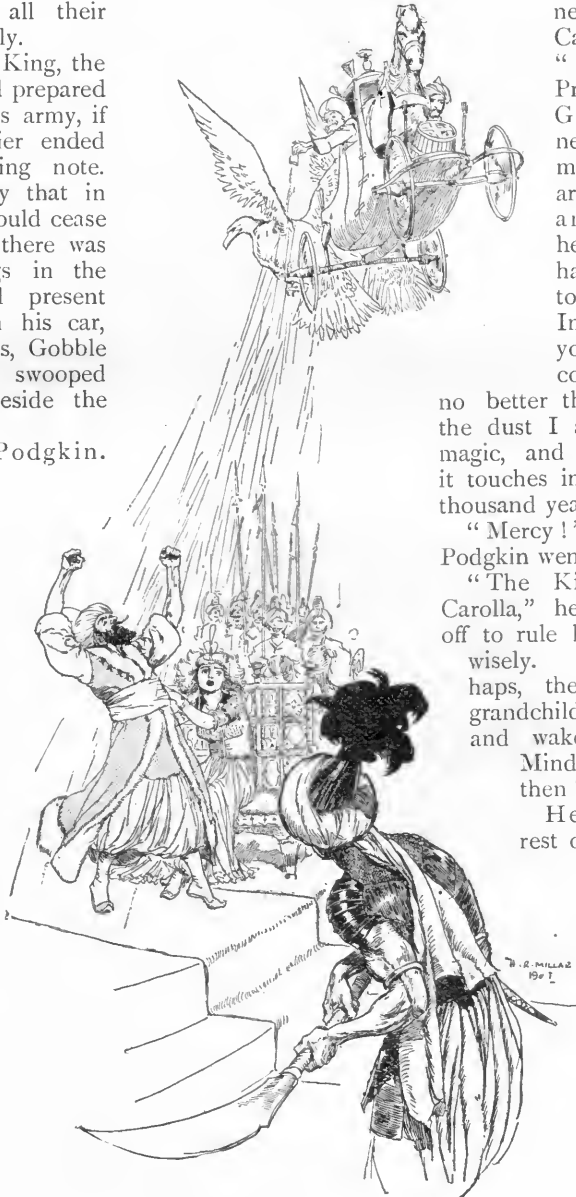
"Mercy!" they cried, but Podgkin went on strewing.

"The King will marry Carolla," he said, "and go off to rule his own country wisely. Some day, perhaps, their great-great-grandchildren will come and wake you to life.

Mind you are better then!"

He emptied the rest of his powder on them.

Then very slowly the rocs rose into the air and flew to Landa-mor.



"'MERCY!' THEY CRIED."

The Most Sensational Motor Ride.

KILPATRICK'S RUSH DOWN A CHUTE.

BY WINSTON SPENCER.



AMERICA is the land of sensationalism. The man, or for that matter the woman either, in work or amusement who can create a sensation is idolized by the crowd. Especially is this the case with regard to recreation. The more daring, risky, and novel the achievement, the more enthusiastic plaudits does it receive from the general public. This spirit of daredevilry is responsible for the widespread popularity of Mr. Charles Kilpatrick, famous for his remarkable and intrepid accomplishments upon the bicycle.

Kilpatrick's feats are rendered all the more striking from the fact that he has only one leg. Several years ago he had the misfortune to have his right leg so badly crushed under a railway train that it had to be amputated near the thigh. Yet apparently he does not miss the member to any great extent, since he is as agile on his solitary leg as the majority of those who still retain their two limbs.

He first leaped into notoriety ten years ago by riding down the steps of the west side of the Capitol at Washington upon a safety bicycle, as the result of a wager. Other intrepid cyclists had previously ridden down the steps upon the east front, but even the

most daring of these aspirants to fame declined to repeat the achievement upon the west front, owing to the exceptional steepness of the steps. Still this fact had no terrors for Kilpatrick, and he descended them mounted upon an ordinary safety bicycle without incurring any mishap. This feat had never been accomplished before and has never been emulated since.

The success of this attempt prompted Kilpatrick to repeat the performance for the edification of the general public. The ride

down the Capitol steps had been achieved by clandestine means, since, had the authorities gleaned any information of the fact, they would have promptly prevented Kilpatrick from rushing to what was apparently certain destruction. Consequently only the parties to the wager were privileged to witness the event. Kilpatrick returned to New York, constructed a long flight of steps similar to those at Washington, and rode down them twice a

day before large audiences at the Madison Square Gardens.

The event was a tremendous success, and Kilpatrick became known as the most daring cyclist in the world. He toured all through the States, and subsequently visited South Africa, where his performance created



MR. CHARLES KILPATRICK ON HIS MOTOR-CAR.
From a Photo.

as great a *furor* as it had in his own country.

When he returned home Messrs. Forepaugh and Sells, the well-known circus proprietors, desired a striking sensational act with which to open this year's season in New York, and they inquired whether Kilpatrick could supply them with such a turn. At first the cyclist was at a loss to devise some novelty, since he did not wish to repeat his cycling performance. He wanted to give his fellow-citizens something novel, startling, and up-to-date. Suddenly he thought of the automobile, and decided to utilize this latest means of locomotion for creating a sensation. He went to the circus managers and laid before them his scheme. It was this. He would erect a long chute placed at a sharp angle stretching from the ground just wide enough to admit the automobile, would race up this, turn his machine round at the top, and then rush down again at full speed. The idea was warmly welcomed by the managers, and Kilpatrick immediately set to work to have the chute constructed.

This structure was extremely massive and heavy in character. It was about 140ft. in length by 5ft. in width. The chute was constructed in three sections to facilitate transport and to enable the structure to be accommodated upon the railroad-cars, since the projector contemplates repeating the performance in other cities.

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The flooring of the incline consisted of boards laid transversely upon heavy beams, securely braced and bolted together to obviate any possibility of the erection collapsing and dashing the intrepid rider to the ground. The chute was only 6in. in excess of the width of the car, leaving a space of 3in. upon either side to allow for steering-way. It will thus be recognised that the steering lever required a steady, iron hand to hold it, since even a little deviation from the straight course

would have thrown the vehicle off the track, to which no protecting rails were placed at the sides. The track was not prepared in any way to retard the pace of the automobile in its descent, but a little powdered resin was distributed upon the boards to prevent the wheels from slipping as much as possible.

The automobile employed by Kilpatrick was of the conventional type made by the Mobile Company of America. It was not built specially for the undertaking, but supplied direct from the stock-room. The vehicle is of the steam

type, with gasoline as fuel. The machine weighs 750lb. The nominal steam pressure is 160lb. to the square inch, but for this particular purpose owing to the stiff gradient to be climbed the steam pressure was increased a little.

Kilpatrick purchased two machines, one being kept in reserve in case of a breakdown to the other. This particular type of machine



KILPATRICK RIDING DOWN THE CHUTE ON A CYCLE.
From a Photo.

is easy and convenient to control, since a reversing lever fitted to the side serves to set the vehicle either for forward or backward motion, while a similar small lever placed upon the same side controls the power. The steering is actuated by a lever placed in front of the driver and the powerful brake is applied by the foot.

While the construction of the chute was in progress Kilpatrick was rehearsing for his act upon the steep hills in the suburbs of Tarrytown and Sing Sing. Notwithstanding the steepness of the hills in this district, none approached the angle of the chute. Still, this practising served to enable him to become acquainted with the vehicle, and to maintain a firm hold of the steering lever so that the car travelled in a straight course down the plane. He also, as shown in the illustration, rode down the chute on his bicycle.

Kilpatrick entered the ring seated in his car and slowly rode round to the foot of the chute. Then, setting the course of his machine, he backed a few feet in order to obtain the necessary start. The power lever was thrown over, and with a whizz he rushed up the inclined plane at full speed, the escaping steam, under the high pressure that was being exerted in order to propel the car, hissing like an ascending rocket. In a few seconds he had gained the platform at the summit of the chute, and nimbly sprang out of the vehicle and turned it round preparatory to the descent. The ascent had been impressive, but the downward run was far more so. With one hand firmly grasping the

steering gear, the other hand placed on the power lever, his foot near the brake, in case some unforeseen accident should occur and render it necessary to bring the car to a standstill, and with his eye fixed upon the bottom of the plane, the daring rider slowly started. Once the whole body of the car had passed over the crown of the incline it rapidly gained momentum, and plunged downwards with terrific velocity. When a few feet distant from the bottom the momentum was so great that the machine on one or two occasions swerved slightly

and skidded sideways. Only a narrow three inches on either side of the car preserved it from destruction. Had the rider lost his presence of mind, or slightly moved the steering handle, the motor-car would have left the track and precipitated its daring rider to instant death. It speaks volumes for Kilpatrick's presence of mind, nerve, and judgment to say that the vehicle, both in its upward and downward journeys, scarcely deflected from the straight line.

Kilpatrick has earned a reputation for intrepidity, but he assured me that riding down this narrow plane in this car was a far greater tax upon his nerves than riding down the steps upon his safety bicycle. In the latter case the only danger to be feared was the collapse of the cycle underneath him, but since it was strongly and rigidly built he entertained no apprehensions on this score. With the automobile circumstances were widely different; the mechanism of a vehicle of this description is composed of so



THE MOTOR-CAR ASCENDING THE CHUTE.
From a Photo.

many intricate parts, the failure of any one of which might prove disastrous. Then again there was the weight of the car to take into consideration. This alone was sufficient to hurl it down the incline at a terrific pace.

Kilpatrick had never ridden up this plane previous to the first performance. On this occasion a catastrophe was narrowly averted. He travelled up the incline, and the moment the front wheels had reached the platform at the top he shut off steam. The result was that the heaviest portion of the machine, including himself, still remained upon the incline, and immediately it began to run backwards. The situation was grasped by his brother and two other assistants who were waiting at the top, and they rushed forward and just managed to haul the machine to safety in the nick of time. A second later it would have rushed backwards down the chute, and no application of the brake could have stopped it, so that it would have been dashed to pieces at the bottom or else fallen over the side.

From an evanescent point of view it does not appear to be a great feat to travel up the plane, but it must be remembered that the exceptional steepness of the gradient was a severe strain upon the driving capacity of the engine. The nearest escape Kilpatrick experienced was on the occasion upon which he was riding up the incline, when, about half-way up,

the lever failed and the car rushed violently down backwards. Kilpatrick was nonplussed for the moment, but he instantly regained his presence of mind and firmly held the steering lever. The car had attained such velocity that the brake at first failed to act, and it was only brought to a standstill two or three inches away from the wall of the arena.

On another occasion when he reached the platform at the top of a building, owing to

momentary pre-occupation, he omitted to shut off the steam, with the result that he crashed into the masonry wall of the building. But these have been the only misadventures that he has suffered, though he informed me that he would soon ride down the steps at the Capitol a dozen times to every single descent he made in his automobile down this sharp chute. One night a young lady, ambitious to experience the sensation of whizzing down the track at lightning speed, accompanied Kilpatrick on his trip, but the excursion was sufficiently exhilarating to

deter her from repeating the ride. The fact that only three inches on either side of the car protected her from eternity was too much for her. Probably the majority of spectators would pronounce the performance as a foolhardy feat. Such may be the case, but as an exemplification of iron nerves, cool judgment, and level-headedness the achievement would be difficult to excel.



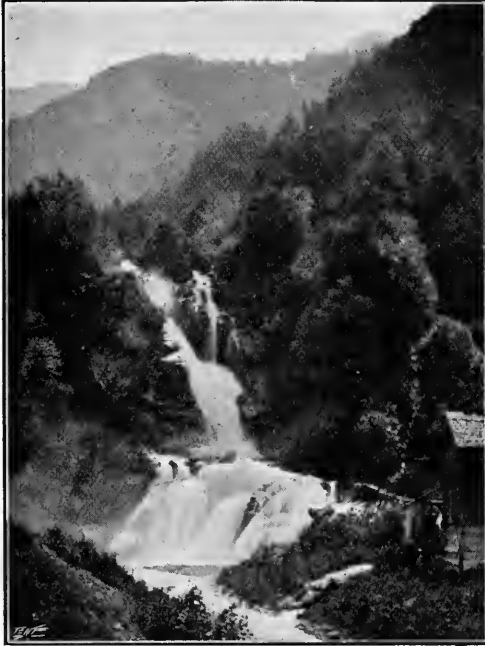
THE MOTOR-CAR RUSHING DOWN THE CHUTE.
From a Photo.

Curiosities.*

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

WHERE SHERLOCK HOLMES DIED.

"I am sending you herewith a photo. of the Lower Reichenbach Falls, Switzerland, which I took about three years ago. It was taken not long after the time when Dr. Conan Doyle, in the series of detective tales which appeared in *THE STRAND*, ended the life of his



hero, Sherlock Holmes, at the famous Reichenbach Falls, and the place shown in the photo. is that which many of the guides at Meiringen were then pointing out to visitors as 'the identical spot where the body of your great English detective, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, was found.' Sherlock Holmes, having once more come to life, I thought your readers might be interested in seeing a photo. of the place where his body is stated to have been recovered."—Mr. Herbert J. Mason, Carlton House, George Road, Edgbaston.



AN EXTRAORDINARY SHADOW.

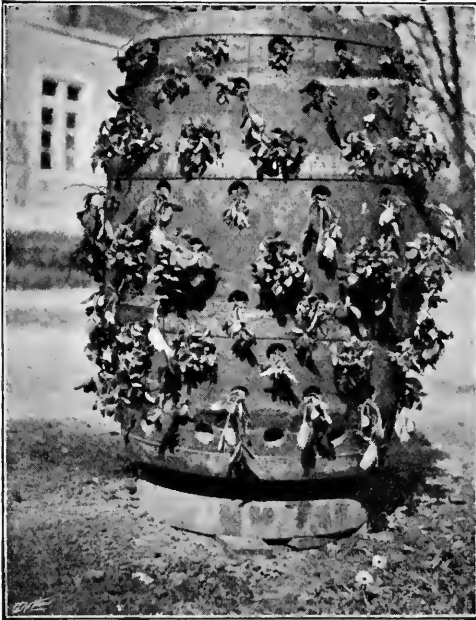
"The photo. of an extraordinary shadow, which I send you, was taken in Kingsham Garden, Chichester. It has curiously enough taken the distinct form of a horse's head with the reins most distinctly shown."—Master R. Habin, Chichester.

A MUSICAL JOKE.

"I send you one of Sir John Stainer's musical jokes, two hymns in one—in B flat or G major, according to the manner in which it is read, upside up or upside down. It was written as an autograph for a friend of his son's."—Miss Warmington, 146, Burnt Ash Hill, Lee, S.E.

J. Stainer April 1892

2/4 turn'd top - si - tue - ray you'll find I shall go if you
 doubt it the proof of the pudding the eat ing will show
 low'd top - si - tue - ray you'll find I shall go if you



A VERTICAL STRAWBERRY-BED.

"I send you a couple of photographs of my somewhat novel strawberry-bed. I took an old barrel and made a number of holes into it, as seen in the first photograph. I then filled the barrel with suitable ground and planted the young strawberry plants through the holes. The first photograph shows the first stage of the strawberry-bed soon after planting. The second photo. was taken later. The barrel is covered with foliage, flower and fruit being found among the leaves in great profusion."—Frau Behrend, Arnau, East Prussia.



AN ANCHOR IN MID-AIR.

"The photo. represents an anchor dropping from a height of 12ft. on to a 2in. iron slab placed on a



bed of concrete, 6ft. thick, so as to fulfil the drop test to meet the requirements of Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping before being accepted as fit for use on board of merchant ships. The anchor is made of cast steel, weighing over $1\frac{1}{4}$ tons, and was manufactured by Messrs. W. Shaw and Co., Wellington Foundry, Middlesbrough, and is one of Messrs. Tyzack and Co.'s Patent Bulldog Stockless Anchors."—An anonymous contributor.

AN APPLE TREE WORTH HAVING.

"Inclosed is a photo. which may prove of interest to your readers. It is of a bunch of five fine apples growing on the stock of a tree about 2ft. from the ground and 5ft. or 6ft. from the branches. According to gardeners in the neighbourhood this is quite unique. The genuineness of the fact can be vouched for (if necessary) by the gentleman in whose garden the incident occurred and by his gardener."—Mr. P. R. Palmer, Hartley Whitney, Winchfield.





A CAMERA THAT "TELLS STORIES."

"Perhaps you might find space under the head of 'Curiosities' in your Magazine for the inclosed photograph. You will see that a man appears to be rowing a boat up a mountain side. It was taken by me in North Wales at Lal-y-llyn Lake, and, of course, what appears to be a mountain is in reality the lake; the result, I suppose, of two exposures by mistake on one film, or it may have been reflection."—Lieut.-Colonel M. O. Stanley, 63, Gloucester Terrace, Hyde Park, W.

A WIDE-AWAKE BANK MANAGER.

"'Westerners,' as residents of the State of Nebraska are known along the Atlantic Coast, although Nebraska is almost the geographical

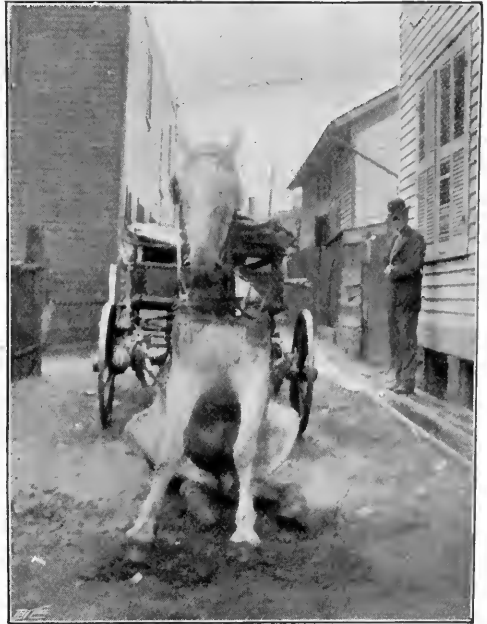


centre of the United States, are reputed to be 'hustlers,' and the accompanying photograph bears testimony to that reputation. It shows 'The Bank of Callaway' the day after a fire had destroyed all of the bank building but the vault. With characteristic enterprise Mr. H. H. Andrews, the cashier of the bank, placed a chair and a table in the vault, opened the door, and, by painting the title of the bank on the exterior of the vault, announced that he was ready for business. This photograph he sent to a friend, who is vice-president of one of the largest banks in Boston, and on the back of it he wrote: 'Still in the ring, though decidedly disfigured.'—Mr. Thomas J.

Feeney, *Boston Herald*, Boston, Mass.

THIS MARE SITS DOWN WHEN TIRED.

"Mr. P. J. Turnbull, a Cleveland (Ohio) plumber, is the owner of a horse which has developed a



peculiarity unusual to the equine race. The animal, a young grey mare, when broken to harness displayed a balky spirit, and when overtaken by a fit of sulks immediately sits upon her haunches like a dog. Neither persuasion nor punishment has the slightest effect until the fit passes. The accompanying photograph was secured while the mare was taking a half-hour's rest on one of the West Side streets. The animal always attracts curious crowds when taking her peculiar rests."—Mr. Clifford Quigley, 413, American Trust Building, Cleveland, O.

WHAT EVER IS THIS?

"I send a photo., which I hope you will insert in THE STRAND. It was taken at the seaside during the holidays, and just as the snap-shot was taken the dog got behind the baby. When the photo. was developed it took some time to make out what the awful creature sitting beside the baby was. The dog's head is near the ground, and its tail forms the monster's head, but we cannot account at all for the face. The dog's ear makes the animal's tail."—Mr. T. S. Dixon, 12, Brambledown, Crouch Hill, N.



A WHITE SPARROW.

"I am sending you a photo. of a white sparrow, which my father caught in the garden last July. He kept it in a cage for about a month, and then it died, so he had it stuffed. The taxidermist said he had never seen one before, and I have never heard of one before. I wonder if any of your readers have ever heard of a white sparrow. I hope you will think it worthy of your 'Curiosity' page."—Mr. W. R. Gaskell,

"Roseleigh," Woolton.

THE POST-OFFICE AND OURSELVES.

As our readers will readily assume, Messrs. Geo. Newnes, Ltd., are on remarkably good terms with the postal authorities. It is no small compliment to the perspicacity of that hard-worked and much-abused body that the envelope, of which the direction is formed by a photograph of part of our offices, was delivered within a few hours of posting at St. Neots, Hunts. We sincerely hope, by the way, that the publication of this photograph will not throw too great a strain upon the experts who deal with this phase of the country's correspondence by inducing those of our subscribers who are photographically inclined to go and do likewise.





WORTHY SONS OF A SPORTSMAN.

"The clever feat illustrated by the accompanying photograph is one performed by the plucky sons of Mr. Winans, the celebrated revolver-shot. The boys ride down the steps on their bicycles at the rate of ten miles an hour, turning the corners without any trouble!"—Mr. Hugh Penfold, 100, High Street, Ashford.



A JUBILEE STAMP-SNAKE.

"This remarkable snake is made entirely of penny English stamps, no half-penny ones. There are 32,500 stamps, not including the head, which is cloth covered with stamps. The snake is 9yds. in length, and took me about nine years to make. It weighs 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ lb."—Miss Bleare Cranesbie, Elmsley Road, Mossley Hill, Liverpool.



"ONLY HALF AN ACCIDENT."

"Here is a rather peculiar photograph. While bending over a drawing on which I was engaged I chanced to move my arm, and feeling my elbow coming in contact with something I looked round, expecting to find that a bottle of Chinese ink had been overturned. I was surprised, however, to see it standing in the position shown, exactly balanced on its edge, in which position it remained long enough for me to get a snapshot of it, a camera fortunately being ready to hand. After replacing it in its

correct position it was only with the greatest difficulty that it was again restored to the critical position on its edge, so it was a



most curious occurrence that it should have been accidentally knocked into it, the bottle being half full at the time."—Mr. C. Stirling, 26, Palace Street, S.W.

THE RESULT OF A LANDSLIP.

"This photograph was taken in the Hebrides. The view is the face of a cliff which had a wire railing along the edge to prevent cattle from falling over. One of the iron supports was leaved into a large stone. A landslip occurred, leaving the stone suspended in mid-air."—Mr. A. N. Dowding, H.M.S. *Britannia*, Dartmouth.

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